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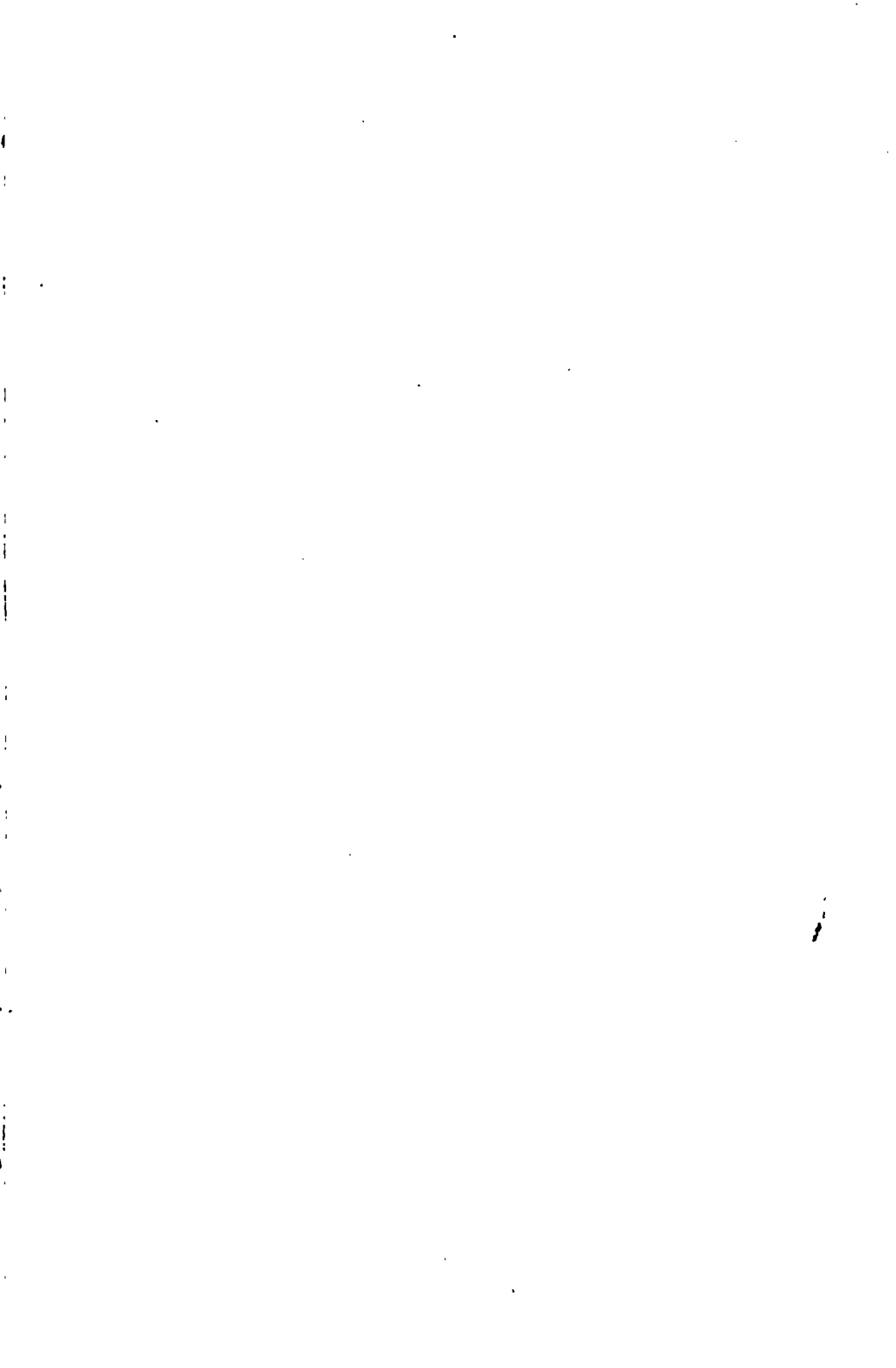
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A GRAND DUCHESS  
VOL. II







*Anna Amalia*  
*from a picture in the collection of the National Museum*

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Figura di donna  
sulla cavalcatura di un cavallo

# A GRAND DUCHESS

THE LIFE OF ANNA AMALIA  
DUCHESS OF SAXE-WEIMAR-EISENACH  
AND THE CLASSICAL CIRCLE OF WEIMAR

BY

FRANCES GERARD

AUTHOR OF "THE ROMANCE OF LUDWIG II.  
OF BAVARIA," "PICTURESQUE DUBLIN," ETC.

WITH 42 ILLUSTRATIONS AND PORTRAITS

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# A GRAND DUCHESS

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## CHAPTER I

FOR persons in private life to amuse themselves with dramatic performances is a very old custom, and one which carries us back to past centuries, when in most towns of note there existed an amateur theatre, in which members of society were at once the performers and the spectators. The universities favoured this practice, and the students performed on a private stage the classical masterpieces of the Greek and Roman writers, as well as light modern comedies.

Always anxious for progress, Anna Amalia in 1771 had invited the famous dramatic company, got together by Seiler, to come to Weimar (which was beginning to be known, in a small way compared with its later reputation, as the home of art and artists). Wieland tells us that Anna

Amalia was thoroughly convinced that a well-ordered theatre can do a great work, in the intellectual improvement and general refinement of a nation.

He adds that this estimable princess, "Not alone desires by this means to amuse the minds of the upper class and give to men whose time is occupied in business matters an agreeable relaxation from their labours, but she also desires to reach the poorer and less educated classes, and to give to *them* the same opportunities, which are the right of those in a superior station of life ; and therefore Weimar enjoys a privilege not known to other capitals in Germany, that of having theatrical performances for which there is *nothing* to pay, while the moral effect upon all who take part is equally remarkable. The author is encouraged to work for a theatre where the excellent training of the actors is a security that his composition will receive full justice. Likewise the literature of Germany, the taste and the reputation of the country, all gain by this step, and are raised to a higher platform." He adds : "Surely the name of Amalia deserves to be written in the book of the Muses for the beneficent protection accorded

by her to every branch of knowledge, by which mankind in general has benefited largely."

So far Wieland. His words were prophetic. The theatre of Weimar attracted numbers of actors, singers, artists, and a school of music grew up, which was placed under the conduct of an Italian artist named Schweizer. By the wish of the duchess, Wieland wrote his "Aurora" and "Alceste" as a basis for German opera. Like all innovations, this new departure caused an outcry. An opera in the unmusical language which Charles the Fifth had declared was only fit for horses!<sup>1</sup>

In spite of the existing prejudice, Wieland's experiment in writing "Alceste" succeeded so well that with one voice the nation called upon the celebrated musician, Glück, inviting him to do honour to the poem by marrying such exquisite verse to equally beautiful music. Unfortunately, so far as Weimar was in question, a check was momentarily placed upon active co-operation in dramatic and musical affairs. The reader will

<sup>1</sup> It was well known that Frederick the Great shared this opinion of the German tongue, and seldom used it, generally speaking, and always writing, to his intimates in French.

remember that when the Residenz Schloss was burned in 1774, the theatre, which was in the castle, was likewise consumed. As there was no theatre, and no funds to build a new one, Seiler and his company returned to Brunswick, from whence they had come on Anna Amalia's invitation. Weimar was therefore left destitute of all theatrical excitement. Occasionally a strolling company passing by stayed a few weeks, setting up an apology for a theatre under canvas; and even to meagre attempts like these the patronage of the court was freely given.

This condition of affairs was, however, soon to change. In 1775 two events took place—Karl August married and Wolfgang Goethe came to Weimar.

The newly married duchess had from her childhood been accustomed to look upon music and the drama as a necessary part of the day's amusement. Like many other foreign towns, Darmstadt had its theatre, with its regular company of actors. That Weimar should be so destitute was a matter of astonishment to Louise. Goethe, too, had that love of the stage and everything connected with the drama that is generally to be

met with in young ardent minds, to whom the very air of the theatre—the peculiar aroma of “saw-dust” as Charles Matthews was wont to call it—is a sort of ambrosia.<sup>1</sup>

Goethe, accustomed at Frankfurt (where there was a fine theatre and a good company) to spend his evenings at his favourite amusement, felt, like the duchess, completely at a loss what to do with himself. The duke commiserated both his wife and his friend, and confessed that he, too, was in a similar position. “But,” he said, “without a theatre and without actors, how is the deficiency to be supplied?” The fertile mind of Goethe found an answer to this question. “Let us find the place,” he said, “and take possession of it, and the company is ready made.” And so it proved.

Anna Amalia’s resourceful mind was very helpful in smoothing over difficulties, and soon a miniature theatre was arranged under her management, first in the *Fürstenhaus*, or ducal residence, and later on in the *Redoute* on the esplanade. This little

<sup>1</sup> This love of the theatre and everything appertaining to it often extends to the playbills, which for ardent playgoers possess a sort of sacredness, as reminiscent of hours of enjoyment never to be forgotten.



theatre was certainly not ambitious. In breadth the stage was not more than eleven feet. Some of the scenery painted for the Residenz theatre had been saved from the fire, and of this several beautifully painted scenes by Kraus could be made available. For the necessary expenses a subscription was started. Anna Amalia subscribed out of her private purse eighty-eight thalers, and for the cost of lighting she agreed to give ten thalers for every representation, Karl August contributing a like amount. The small scale on which the plays had to be produced in no way hindered the enjoyment of the spectators, or interfered with the success of the amateur performances in this *bijou* theatre.

Just at this period private theatricals were more the rage than they are at present; for now-a-days amateurs have at last learned that they do not compare very favourably with well-trained professional performers. But in the latter portion of the eighteenth century the distinction between the amateur and the professional was less marked; for the reason that the stage was on a far lower level, and really good actors were rare. "In Berlin, Dresden, Frankfurt, Augsburg, Nüremberg,

and Fulda, there were celebrated amateur companies. In Wurtemberg for a long time a noble company put on sock and buskin ; in Eisenach prince and court joined in the sport. Even the universities, which in earlier times had, from religious feeling, denounced the drama, now forgot their antagonism, and in Vienna, Halle, Göttingen, and Jena allowed the students to have private stages."

I find from contemporary sources that the amateur company of Weimar was considered superior to all others. It had its poets, its composers, its scene-painters, its critics, and its costumiers; it embodied a company of which even the recruits were ready-made actors. Any-one who showed talent for any particular branch, whether singing, dancing, or love-making, was at once seized upon and made to join the *corps dramatique*.

Anna Amalia, the duke, Prince Constantine, and the ladies and gentlemen of the Court, were all willing to take a part at the shortest notice, and devoted their very best energies to the performance of the most insignificant rôles. The rehearsals were supervised by Goethe and Von

Seckendorf, an admirable comedian. The regular company, which, however, was constantly being added to, consisted of Karl August, Prince Constantine, Knebel, Einsiedel, Bode, Musäus, Seckendorf, Bertuch, Kranz, and Goethe. Eckhoff, an actor permanently engaged at Gotha, came over occasionally to play what are called "guest parts."<sup>1</sup> The women were Duchess Anna Amalia, Corona Schröter, Amalia von Kotzebue, Madame Wolf, Fräulein von Göchhausen, and others.

The front seats were reserved for the court officials, privy councillors, etc. After that places were allotted to the general public. There was no paying for tickets, but it would appear that the *dramatis personæ* contributed to the expenses, although it is not positively stated that such was the case. Still, we are told that the first year's performances paid *all the expenses*, but that, as the next year's were on a grander scale, the duke had to give assistance, and that he generously defrayed the cost of the scenery, dresses, and lighting. Bertuch, the comptroller of the duke's

<sup>1</sup> For his co-operation Eckhoff received, as a present, a gold snuff-box worth £31. His very modest score at the inn—about fifteen shillings for eight days, was also paid.

household, was likewise the theatrical paymaster ; and we read of his shaking his head solemnly at having to pay a hundred thalers (£15) for the cost of one performance. This does not seem a large sum from our point of view, but as these entertainments were of constant occurrence, they constituted a somewhat expensive amusement. When the plays were performed outside of Weimar, the duke had no share in the expenses, which were generally borne by the Duchess Amalia.

When we look back over the one hundred and thirty years, or so, which have passed since the amateur theatre of Weimar was the sole institution of its kind that the inhabitants of Weimar and Jena possessed, we are struck by the fidelity with which history repeats itself. Here we have a set of amateurs—with few exceptions—taking upon themselves the office of well-trained actors, confident in their own strength, and venturing to range themselves on the same platform with actors educated to the stage. What cool audacity ! What absurd vanity ! you may exclaim. This, however, would be a mistaken verdict, based, probably, on what we all have suffered from the vanity of the present-day amateur, who, unable

as he is to carry his stick properly or walk the stage naturally, yet considers himself quite the equal of any well-trained actor. We see examples of this absurd self-conceit every day, and often suffer in pocket from our friends' crass vanity.

This was not the case with the amateurs of 1776. It was a part of education in the eighteenth century, especially in Germany, where intellectual cultivation had attained such a relatively high standard, for young persons in good positions who had no idea of making the stage a profession, to learn how to declaim, and how to walk, moving the different members of the body, —head, arm, hand, and foot, as Nature had intended they should be moved. They were, in fact, taught to do these small things after the manner of the stage. This was principally the case at public schools, where the students gave a performance once a year. And when I use the word taught, I do not mean to convey the perfunctory sort of teaching given in schools of the present day, with the arm sawing the air, and articulation much on a par with that of a Hyde Park orator, but a school of oratory wherein each pupil was taught the art of declaiming. We

also have to remember, in connection with the excellence of these Weimar Thespians, that, in consequence of the long-continued wars, most of the public theatres had been closed, and that the large towns relied for their theatrical amusements on the amateur playhouse.

As I have before remarked, amateur theatres of great excellence were scattered all over Germany. The acting at the Weimar theatre was good all round. Goethe, who was passionately fond of acting, was, especially in the beginning, too violent in his delivery, and at all times his movements were too stiff. In 1776 he had become director, Karl August resigning in his favour. As Wolfgang could do nothing by halves, the wonder is how he found time to attend so many different undertakings—political, artistic, and social.

There is no doubt that, from the time the management of the theatre came into his hands, a great advance was made in theatrical matters ; the quality of the acting was improved, and likewise the choice of pieces differed from the somewhat old-fashioned selections of Anna Amalia, who was at first associated with the duke in the theatrical management. Goethe was firm and

rather autocratic in his sway, allowing no outside interference with his orders, which had to be strictly followed. No neglect was permitted, and the smallest item or the most insignificant part had to be studied and rehearsed, with as much care as if the success of the whole play depended on its proper performance.

That there was much opposition to these strict rules is easy to imagine; and the difficulties he had to encounter were only to be surmounted by a man of his determined will. Some of the troubles of a stage-manager's life can be gathered from Goethe's "Little Notes." When his charming play, *Die Mitschuldigen* (The Culprits), was in rehearsal, he had considerable difficulty with Einsiedel, who finally resigned his part; but not until Goethe had written to him: "I swear you will do it well, if only you will put your mind to it. I don't know what I shall do. The others play well, but I have absolutely no one to take the part of Söller, and I know that you will play it admirably. Perhaps I will call to see you to-day."

Again he writes more earnestly: "Einsiedel, I beg and beseech that you will fix your stupid

mind on your part. The others are first-rate. To-morrow I could rehearse with you alone, and on Saturday with the rest. Monday at the theatre, and Tuesday or Wednesday the performance."

It is evident from the following playbill that Einsiedel remained fixed in his stupidity, and was therefore replaced in the part of Söller by Bertuch.

## DIE MITSCHULDIGEN.

<i>Alceste</i>	...	...	...	...	...	GOETHE.
<i>Söller</i>	...	...	...	...	...	BERTUCH.
<i>Der Wirth</i>	...	...	...	...	...	MUSÄUS.
<i>Sophie</i>	...	...	...	...	CORONA	SCHRÖTER.

Another play, written by Goethe specially for the company, was *Die Geschwister* (The Brother and Sister) written in three evenings, and inspired it was said, by the love of the sweet eyes of Amalia von Kotzebue, sister of the dramatist, who was at this time only a youth. He says in his memoirs: "Goethe had at that time written his charming piece, *Die Geschwister*.<sup>1</sup> It was performed at the amateur theatre in Weimar, Goethe playing William and my sister, Marianne, while to me—

<sup>1</sup> In this piece a device occasionally made use of nowadays was employed. The stage was divided in two by a screen, the action being carried on simultaneously on both sides of the partition.



yes, to me—was allotted the part of Postillion." Goethe threw his whole strength into his performances of *Alceste*, a part which had a certain analogy to the position in which he stood to Frau von Stein. Nevertheless, the argus eyes of the court gossips noticed that his embraces of Marianne were of a more affectionate character than is usual with fraternal embraces. Probably he had a *mauvais quart d'heure* with his Charlotte later on.

Frau von Stein seems to have had no talent for the stage, or perhaps she imagined it was not in keeping with the *rôle* of the neglected wife, which she had assumed. Still, it seems extraordinary that Goethe did not press her to join the "troupe"; for it would have been delightful to have been her instructor, as he had been to many a *débutante*.

Wolfgang and the duke were always on the lookout for new recruits, either in the town, amongst the court set, or in the neighbourhood; and any pretty girl or handsome young fellow was sure to be enlisted in the duke's company. There were rehearsals almost every day of either an opera or a play, so that these so-called amateurs had to work as hard as professionals, without any reward beyond the honour of being included in so fashionable

an undertaking. Besides, to the young people there was a delightful novelty in playing at being actors and actresses.

Those who have ever taken part in such amusements will readily understand the pleasurable excitement of this almost feverish life, with its triumphs and its failures, its squabbles and its intense excitement, the rehearsals and the pleasant suppers, the flirtations and the love-making. Oh, it is a pleasant time, this time of play-acting ; and the Weimar theatricals were pretty much the same as the performances that you and I have assisted at, for human nature has not altered much since those days, although perhaps *we* have grown less outwardly proper than were our grandmothers, and less *hardi* than were our grandfathers, who, if report tells truth, were somewhat audacious in their love-making. Be that as it may, the Weimar theatricals were exceedingly popular, and the fame of the fun which they afforded—and, not least, the opportunities given for flirtation—all fanned the flame and added to their popularity.

The company was in truth a distinguished one. The dowager duchess, the reigning duke,

and Prince Constantine were often included in the caste, likewise the first officials of the court, statesmen, ministers, generals, and military men of all ranks in the service, pages, and private individuals. The acting was good all round. Goethe, who was passionately fond of the stage, made an interesting lover, but, as before stated was, especially in the beginning, too violent, and at all times his movements were stiff—for example, as Alceste in *Die Mitschuldigen*, as Orestes in *Iphigenia* and as Belcour in *The West Indian*. Moreover he was what is called in theatrical slang “a bad study”; that is to say he could not or would not learn his part, but trusted to his power of extemporising. This is a fault common to most amateur actors, and one which would not be tolerated in professionals, who would soon hear of it if they did not give their proper “cue.”

But so far as Goethe is in question, one is surprised, not so much that he occasionally forgot his words, but that he ever remembered them, seeing that his memory was charged with such a multiplicity of different subjects. Not only was he actor and stage manager (nothing being done

without his personal supervision or written directions), but he also composed most of the pieces which were acted, the music, when it took the shape of operetta, being contributed by Sigmund von Seckendorf, who had much musical talent.

Kapellmeister Wolf, an excellent musician (his wife had been a *prima donna* of the second order of merit), likewise composed excellently well; and there was later a remarkable addition in the musician Schubart. Sometimes the duchess herself, who, as we already know, had much taste for music, contributed a song or two. She also wrote an operetta, *Erwin and Elmira*, to which Goethe added two songs. This was performed in 1777 with much success. It did not, however, attain more than a *succès d'estime*, nor did its composer desire for it a more extended arena.

Amongst the theatrical company at Weimar, there were two women who would have been remarkable at any period for their beauty and their talent. These were the two celebrated singers, Fräulein von Fach—Corona Schröter<sup>1</sup>—and Fräulein Louise von Rüdorf. The first

<sup>1</sup> Sometimes written Schroeter but more often Schröter.

of these ladies deserves special mention. Corona Elizabeth Wilhelmina Schröter was born in 1750 at Guben, and was trained for the stage at Leipzig by Hiller, whose wife was Corona's godmother. She sang when only fourteen with Mara at the Leipzig concerts, and there Goethe, then in his student days, got to know the charming young girl musician, who was surrounded by admirers. When she was sixteen, Müller, one of the Leipzig burgomasters, wanted to marry her, but his offer was refused. Later, a rich nobleman, already provided with a wife and family, of which appendages he said not a word, enticed the youthful Corona to meet him at Dresden, promising to marry her there. Fortunately, on her arrival, she was informed of his true position, and returned to Leipzig without seeing him. Another lover was Körner (best known as Schiller's friend). In 1787, Schiller, writing to Körner says :

“ Her figure and the remains of a beautiful face are a complete justification of your infatuation for this gifted woman. What must she have been when forty years have taken so little from her charm ? ”



CORONA SCHRÖTER.



Corona's beauty lay principally in her Junoesque figure and wonderful grace, charms which, however, do not always resist the advances of time, so well as they did in her case. Goethe, who saw her in 1776 when she was at the zenith of her successful career, wrote to Frau von Stein: "The Schröter is an angel. If only Providence would send me such a wife, I would leave you in peace." A cast of the actress's beautiful hand can be seen amongst the treasures collected in the *Goethehaus* at Weimar, and one of his best poems (on Mieding's death) is dedicated to the actress. Corona, or Krone as Goethe called her, had every charm that could chain the affections of a man like Wolfgang. That she in a measure sacrificed a great career to live in the comparative shade of so small a town as Weimar, is undoubted evidence that she regarded Goethe with a tender feeling. She sang exquisitely and was an excellent musician, her compositions being very harmonious and pleasing. On the stage her walk and every motion were full of nobility and grace. Although in her declamation she was apt to be somewhat too emphatic, her movements were perfectly under her control.



After she had been for many years a member of the amateur company of Weimar, she left the stage and became a *kammersängerin*, making her home altogether in Weimar, where she had many warm friends. In 1818 she died at Ilmenau, regretted by all who had known her.

Another charming singer was Fraulein von Rüdorf, who later on became Major von Knebel's wife. She had a beautiful voice of great flexibility, joined to wonderful purity and freshness of tone, and had been well trained in the Berlin Academy. It was quite by accident, however, that she became a professional singer; but having made a success in the leading part in the *Mondkäse*, she remained as a permanent member of the company. She sang *rôles* such as Zerlina in *Don Giovanni*, Marguerite of Valois, and in *Richard Cœur de Lion*. On her marriage she left the stage, and accepted a post in the household of the Duchess Amalia, where she was also much esteemed as a private singer. She was still living in 1840, having lost her husband as well as her beloved patroness. She is often mentioned in Wieland's letters as the pretty Rüdchen.

Goethe, Einsiedel, Seckendorf, Knebel, Bertuch,

and Musäus all wrote for the amateur stage. Many of their works have been lost, but mention is made of most of them in the *Tiefurter Journal*.

Kraus, a very clever artist, undertook the painting of the scenery and the decoration of the stage, together with the control of the supers and carpenters, a rather arduous task. The name of Mieding, the first-rate machinist of the company, has been made immortal by Goethe's well-known lines.

With such exceptional management, and with a company endowed with many exceptional gifts, the amateur stage of Weimar could not fail to win a reputation unique in Europe, and one which has lived to the present day. To those who have had experience of the difficulties of managing an amateur company, due to the susceptibility, jealousy, and abnormal vanity of each individual, it seems an almost incredible fact that it should have existed for so many years without some terrible upheaval. Nevertheless, it is "a colossal truth" that, amongst this remarkable assemblage of talent, geniality and complete absence of anything like squabbles were a marked feature. For the rest, the arrangements were thoroughly original. For

instance, there was the unique idea of having two companies, one for French the other for German plays, both of which were on the same footing and equally well looked after. The stage, being movable, was changed with the company that played.

It would seem, however, that a more distinct necessity for two companies arose from the same cause that often prevails under our present-day management. The Weimar actors received so many invitations to visit outlying provinces, that it was absolutely necessary to increase the *dramatis personæ*. These noble vagrants, thoughtless, extravagant, jovial, true Thespians at heart, in a right merry spirit, as Thusnelda describes, were ready to pack up bag and baggage and travel over hill and dale, from one hunting lodge, country seat, or distant town to another, from Ettersburg to Tiefurt, Belvedere, or further afield to Dornburg, Jena, Ilmenau, Erfurt, Rudolfstadt, and even as far as Leipzig. The actors had thus the advantage of a new public, and so avoided the terrible pitfall of always acting to the same audience, which in the long run is destructive of all individuality in an actor. The fresh

surroundings and different circumstances in which the company found themselves were of immense service in giving confidence to new recruits, and correcting those mannerisms which are often the result of always playing before the same audience of friendly admirers. The efforts necessary to overcome the strangeness, the disadvantages and the obstacles which of necessity occurred in these Bohemian experiences, were of infinite value, and tended to form an altogether stronger type of actor than those now trained as it were in the more tender nursery at home.

It was, however, in Weimar itself and in its immediate neighbourhood that the dramatic life, under the immediate influence of Goethe, reached its highest point.

On the French stage the parts best played were by President von Lyncker, whose forte was *Mantellrollen* (old men's parts), Stallmeister von Stein, who had been many years in France, Count Puthus, and Einsiedel, who had the air of a *petit maître* especially in his young days, and was admirable as a forward page, etc. Goethe wavered between the romantic and the humorous rôles. Von Knebel was always the dignified

father, or the offended husband, or the self-sacrificing somebody. The personality of Professor Musäus was laughter-provoking, even if he never spoke, and he was a good comic actor to boot.<sup>1</sup> Einsiedel preferred the *rôle* of lover, in which, however, he was not so popular as Goethe. Karl August also, and Prince Constantine, were constantly in the cast. The duke seems to have had certain gifts; at all events, he acted well enough *for a duke*, and was of course applauded accordingly. Prince Constantine was, I think, only once entrusted with an important part, that of Pylades in Goethe's *Iphigenia*, and played it only *once*, Karl August afterwards taking his place. Neither does Anna Amalia (who must have first place among the lady players) appear to have made any success beyond that accorded to her by esteem. One comes to this conclusion from the absence of all remark. Even Frau Rath Goethe fails to contribute one of her "honest, uncon-

<sup>1</sup> Professor Musäus had originally been in the Church, but the strict Lutherans of Farnroda in Eisenach refused his ministrations because he had on one occasion been seen to dance. Anna Amalia, who was, as we know, free from such strait-laced prejudices, befriended Musäus, and obtained for him the post of Professor in the Gymnasium.

trollable outbursts" of admiration. So, I think we must conclude that the *dear woman's* gifts did not lie in this direction. We may, however, be pretty sure that she never discovered the fact. Fräulein Göchhausen played the sprightly waiting-maid, and coquetted with the wicked French nobleman, who wanted to run away with her mistress. We know the sort of part. She varied it occasionally by taking that of a governess, but at all times she was clever and amusing, and it pains one to hear that some unfeeling people laughed at her deformity.

Mention must be made of the children's plays which occasionally took place, and which were admirably put on the stage. In one of these, called the *Edelknabe* (Noble Boy), young von Lyncker played the principal *rôle*, that of the prince was given to von Contes, who afterwards became president, while the part of the mother was taken by Frau Bonda, *kammerfrau* to the duchess. Young von Lyncker acted so well, that Anne Amalia promised him a watch set with turquoises, similar to one she had lent him for the performance; the little actor was also invited to the next ball at the *Redoute*.

The number of pieces produced at the Weimar Theatre is astonishing, and most of them were written by this wonderful circle of poets, writers, and geniuses. Einsiedel had a nice turn for comedies, most of them after the school of Louis XIV. He likewise adapted some of Molière's comedies. Knebel, who was always ponderous, wrote for the theatre, but imported so much of his gravity as to be wearisome. Goethe and, later, Schiller wrote some of their finest plays for the Weimar stage. Mention has already been made of the *Mitschuldigen* and *Die Geschwister*, both by Goethe. Other pieces came later on.

*The West Indian*, by Cumberland, appears in the theatrical repertory. It seems strange to read of Karl August playing Major O'Flaherty, Eckhoff the Father, and Goethe Belcour, the last named being dressed in a white coat with silver lace, blue silk vest, and blue silk knee-breeches, in which costume he said to have looked superb.

In January 1777 a new piece, called *Lila*, was played, its principal merit being the large sum spent in producing it—7,516 thalers, an enormous sum even for the present day. Oefer, Anna Amalia's instructor in drawing, made exorbitant charges for

painting the scenery, while the dresses cost seventy thalers apiece. In a letter written by Goethe to Bertuch, he says : " I must give the chief conductor of the orchestra a *douceur*, for he worked hard ; also the town musicians must have something ; therefore send Seckendorf forty-two thalers to distribute amongst them. G."

Amusements must be paid for, but we cannot be surprised that the poorer population grumbled at the extravagance of the court.

In 1778 Goethe's restless genius took a new departure. He tells his Charlotte that he has written a new play for the birthday of the Duchess Louise.

" It is a piece of nonsense, a comic opera—no less—full of folly and fun, an you please. If Seckendorf will set the rhymes to music that will fit them, we shall give it in winter time." And to Merck he writes, asking him, " What do you think of my new departure ? You will say I am riding the demon of parody to death. Think of all the actors you know who lend themselves best to caricature. You will see at my mother's a sketch of the dresses, from a drawing by Kraus."



The real facts, however, were that the new piece, which was called *The Triumph of Sentimentality*, was written when Goethe was suffering keenly from an unfortunate consequence of his sentimental teaching in the *Sorrows of Werther*. A young girl committed suicide by throwing herself into the river Ilm. It seemed she had been deserted by her lover. In her pocket was a copy of the *Sorrows of Werther*. The body was taken to the house of Frau von Stein, as the nearest to the place where the misfortune occurred, and every effort made to restore life. Goethe remained all day trying to console the wretched parents. The incident distressed him deeply and added strength to his crusade against Wertherism and sentimentality, which he now exhibited in the most ridiculous light.

The hero of the piece is a prince, who lives for nothing but sentiment and serenades. He adores nature—in books, or as one sees it on the stage. Sunrise is lovely, but it breaks one's sleep; morning air, too, is often chilly, so he prefers remaining in bed. He, therefore, has a mechanical device made, a sort of travelling diorama, wherein trees, rocks, mountains, rivers, woods, in short, everything neces-

sary for a romantic situation, could be presented at a moment's notice. Then the prince falls in love, but he wishes to be in love without having to submit to a woman's caprice or ruinous exactions ; therefore a doll, he thinks, will answer the purpose as well. So one is made for him of life-size, and dressed in the same clothes as the woman he admires. To it he makes the most extravagant love. The real woman (Corona Schröter) appears, but he will have none of her and prefers his dolly ; thus sentimentality triumphs.<sup>1</sup>

It has been justly said that, "National wit is scarcely amenable to criticism. What the German thinks exquisitely ludicrous is to a Frenchman or Englishman often of mediocre mirthfulness."

The cost of producing this piece came to £60, (three hundred and ninety-eight thalers), the chief item of expense being the dresses, which were unusually handsome. Corona Schröter's cost sixty thalers (£9). The scenery and accessories were, on the other hand, very moderate. A painted moon was only one thaler, the doll's wig two thalers, and her stuffing only seven groschen.

<sup>1</sup> This piece appears in Goethe's works under the name of *Die Geflickte Braut*.

This piece makes dull reading now, but when it was originally played at Weimar, Böttiger<sup>1</sup> tells us it was full of "exquisite fooling." "Coarse it was," he adds, "and most personal." This latter quality is naturally lost on readers of to-day. The satire was declared equal to that of Aristophanes, the spectators seeing themselves as in a mirror. At the end the doll was ripped open, and out fell a multitude of books which were then the rage, amongst them "Waldemar" and "Werther." The piece was interspersed with ballets, music, and comical changes of scene, so that what now reads as a dull farce was then a delightful extravaganza, bubbling over throughout with the same farcical spirit as is shown in the *Marktschreier of Plundersweilern*, full of the most scathing sarcasms, and ridiculing the author's own works as well as those of Wieland and Jacobi.

For the rest, the methods resorted to in these parodies were decidedly in the worst taste. Every person who had any peculiarity, or whose life contained any adventure which lent itself to burlesque,

<sup>1</sup> An archæologist of some merit, but whose reputation suffered in consequence of his journalistic indiscretions. He wrote diffusely about Schiller and Goethe; he was on friendly terms with Herder and Wieland; also with the strangers who visited Weimar.

was introduced into the piece, the unfortunate original being present, a fact which—of course—increased the fun. It must be granted that Goethe in no way spared himself, *Werther* and his sentimentality being, as we have seen, made supremely ridiculous. By so doing, he thought he earned the right to burlesque others, and, as the duke appeared to thoroughly enjoy this “pillory of wit,” no one ventured to say a word against what was undoubtedly a breach of good manners. Moreover, a man of Goethe’s genius should have been above “burlesquing,” which is not a refined amusement, especially when carried so far as to ridicule publicly a work like Wieland’s *Alceste*. There was a general feeling of disapprobation when the famous farewell of Alceste to Ahmet, “Weep not, thou idol of my soul!” was accompanied by the sound of the posthorn. Wieland, who was present, gave a loud cry and left the theatre. Every one present felt that a man of his age and position should not have been exposed to so public an insult.

In *Orpheus and Eurydice*, composed by Seckendorf, Wieland’s *Alceste* was again chosen as a subject for burlesque, and yet, strange to say,

Anna Amalia lent her countenance to this insult to her old friend by playing the part of Eurydice, Seckendorf taking that of Orpheus, who is represented as an Italian improvisator who has come to demand the release of his beloved from the shadowy kingdom below the earth. The other characters were played by Bode, Countess Bernstorff, and Herr Seidler. The performance was strictly private, only twelve persons being present.

Goethe wrote to Frau Stein of this affair: "We have made merry over Wieland's masterpiece; after all one must be foolish sometimes, and we are no worse than the generality of mankind."

Wieland did not see the matter in this light. Writing to Merck he expresses himself in strong terms: "What gives me pain," he says, "is that every blackguard trick that takes place at Weimar or at Ettersburg is made known, God knows how, to the world at large. You'll therefore soon hear of the honour done to me at Ettersburg; namely that in a farce called *Orpheus and Eurydice*, the song:

"'Weep not, thou idol of my soul!'"

was parodied in the most ridiculous manner you can well imagine, and threw the large audience

into shouts of laughter—this is how we treat our friends here. The unclean spirit of *polissonnerie* and ridicule of everything most sacred, which has for a long time prevailed in the higher circles, supersedes all feelings of decency, all ideas of fitness of place and season, all delicacy, all modesty, and deadens all shame. I confess I am weary of it; I believe, however, the intention is to disgust me, and so drive me into the *sottise* of leaving.”

Goethe at this time writes in his dairy: “We are committing all sorts of follies here.” It would seem, indeed, as if the demon of discord had entered into his mind. A few days before the Wieland episode, an equally unpleasant incident took place in the trial of Jacobi, for writing a novel called “Waldemar.” The two brothers Jacobi belonged to the Sentimentalist school, and were intimate with the literary set of Weimar. The younger brother had written “Waldemar” which was read out to a select circle, seated under an oak tree at Ettersburg.

The reading over, judgment was pronounced and sentence passed. Then Goethe ascended the tree, and to punish the writer and to give a warning to others, the book was nailed to the tree by its cover, the leaves fluttering in the wind, to the

great delight of all who saw it. Jacobi,<sup>1</sup> when he heard of this trial and sentence, was indignant, and let Goethe hear of his anger. Goethe answered through a friend that the whole matter was to him unpleasant, the book eminently so, and that he could not resist the temptation to turn it into a burlesque, particularly the close, where "Waldemar" is fetched by the devil, etc. The Duchess Anna Amalia had a printing press of her own at Ettersburg, and on this a copy of a revised "Waldemar" was printed, with woodcuts and some "alterations." The duchess-dowager sent Merck a copy of this skit, saying: "If this venture pleases the public, a new volume will shortly follow."

We turn with relief from the spectacle of genius descending to buffoonery to welcome *Iphigenia*, one of Goethe's finest dramas, but one which was not finished without many struggles and much grief of heart, which at times amounted almost to despair. His letters to his friends,

<sup>1</sup> Fritz, Jacobi (whose "Waldemar" was pilloried), writing to Knebel, says: "I heard Goethe tell a lady that Herder was the vainest of all the men he ever knew. What Goethe said of Herder all Germany says now of Goethe. His self-importance and pride are making him foolish. Every one knows of Wieland's and Klopstock's vanity, and Lessing sold himself to the devil out of pure vanity."

and especially to Frau von Stein, tell the story of what a poet can suffer in the effort to realise the dream of his poetic nature, especially in the heated atmosphere of court life, which was so adverse to the lofty theme which filled his mind, and which as yet he could not bring forth.

Lest his conception of the high-souled Grecian maiden should fail in its intention, he took flight. He writes from Dornburg, March 10th, after a few days' residence there :

"The piece is coming into shape, its limbs begin to work. I live with the men of this place. I eat and drink, joke sometimes, but am hardly conscious of what I am about. My interior life follows another and very different road. Now I have a faint hope that I may make my escape between eleven and twelve to-night from Apolda."

Again he writes to Knebel, to whom was entrusted the part of Thoas :

"Excellent old man, I must confess I am a perambulating poet. If only I could get two or three quiet days to myself in the dear little castle at Dornburg, I should get finished in no time. Of such good luck I see no chance at



present. This evening the noise made by two dogs has nearly driven me wild. Neither threats nor *pourboires* to their owners will get them silenced."

In March he writes to Frau Stein: "It is useless, the thing is accursed!"

And again, the same day, to Knebel, he complains bitterly of the uselessness of his efforts. On the 7th there seems no salvation anywhere, "and I am tormented grievously by one scene in particular. I think if only I could get a good start, the rest would follow at a swinging pace."

From Büttstadt he writes more cheerfully, and from Allstadt comes the news that the first three acts are ready. On the 13th, he writes to Knebel:

"See Prince Constantine alone (he was to play Pylades), read him over his part quietly, and give him some hints how it is to be played."

On March the 16th he goes away again to Ilmenau with the determination not to return until the piece is finished. He wrote the fourth act in one day, sitting on the Schwalben rock



GOETHE AND CORONA SCHRÖTER AS "ORESTES" AND "IPHIGENIA."



at Ilmenau ; and on the 28th, the drama was finished.

On April 6th (in Easter week) the first performance of *Iphigenia* took place. The caste was as follows :—

<i>Orestes</i> <sup>1</sup>	...	...	GOETHE
<i>Pylades</i>	...	...	PRINCE CONSTANTINE <sup>2</sup>
<i>Thoas</i> ...	...	...	KNEBEL
<i>Arkas</i> ...	...	...	SEIDLER
<i>Iphigenia</i>	...	...	CORONA SCHRÖTER.

“Never shall I forget,” exclaims Dr. Hufeland, “the impression Goethe made as Orestes in his Grecian costume. One might have fancied him Apollo. Never before had there been seen such union of physical and intellectual beauty in one man.” His acting, nevertheless, according to his biographer, had the defects of most amateurs, being impetuous and yet stiff, exaggerated and yet cold. He had other faults which have been mentioned

<sup>1</sup> Thusnelda writes to Frau Aja :

“I will only say that Goethe played Orestes in the most masterly manner. His costume was Grecian, so was that worn by Pylades, and in my life I never saw him look so splendid. For the rest, the whole piece was played to admiration. To-day it will be repeated, and much as I look forward to seeing it, I would gladly give up my place if I knew Frau Aja would take it.”

<sup>2</sup> Prince Constantine played the part only once. We are not told the reason, but can imagine it.

before, but in spite of his defects he managed to charm his audience, and there is no doubt in humorous parts he was equal to the best professional actor of his day. Anna Amalia writes to Frau Goethe, to thank her for some little present, and sends her a copy of *Iphigenia*.

“ WEIMAR, 1778.

“ DEAR GOOD MOTHER,

“I am in receipt of two letters from you and also the boxes of biscuits, for which I thank you heartily. What you tell me of the marriage of La Roche's daughter<sup>1</sup> is incomprehensible. I have shown your letter to Doctor Wolf, but his residence at court has taught him fine manners, so he neither ground his teeth nor cursed under his breath, but shrugged his shoulders at the lamentable history. We are all curious to learn the name of the man to whom poor Louise

<sup>1</sup> Sophie De la Roche, the Sentimentalist, was forcing her young daughter Louise to marry a man described by Frau Aja as a monster. She told the duchess that Goethe would grind his teeth and curse under his breath. The eldest daughter of Madame De La Roche had been one of Goethe's many loves, but the mother had interfered, and had forced the girl into a marriage with a wealthy merchant, with whom she was miserable. Hence Frau Aja's indignation.

is to be sacrificed. The proverb which says, 'Judge me by my words but not by my actions,' applies to these Sentimentalists, who have no hearts. The third festival has passed off well, and Thusnelda will send you a full account. It has been again repeated and with great applause. I must send you the whole score of *Iphigenia*, that you may judge for yourself what a fine work it is.

"You wish, dear mother, to know who has cut out my silhouette.<sup>1</sup> It is the work of your son, who first drew it and gave it to his faithful Philip who cut it out. That is the whole riddle.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The silhouette of Anna Amalia was cut by Goethe, who had a peculiar talent for this art, which was most fashionable towards the end of the eighteenth century, and continued till the thirties, when the first appearance of the daguerreotype put it in the shade. The art of silhouettes was not to cut an ordinary likeness, but to give to it a *souçon* of a caricature, by exaggerating some trifling feature, etc. Goethe succeeded in this to perfection.

Whole length silhouettes of the Goethe period, 1775-80, are to be found in the Goethe Museum at Weimar, also in the Witthums palace there is a silhouette of Goethe leaning on a pedestal.

<sup>2</sup> Philip Seidel, Goethe's confidential servant. He was a native of Frankfurt, and had been in the service of Goethe's father as a secretary and servant. When Goethe went to Weimar he took Seidel with him. Goethe reposed the greatest trust in him and when he went to Italy Philip was the only one who was in his confidence. He was also entrusted with the charge of his correspondence.

Towards the end of May I expect Merck at Ettersburg. Ah, mother, dear mother, I am sure you guess my thoughts. How is it with the old father? Give him many greetings from me.

"Good-bye, best of mothers, keep me in your thoughts and think of me often.

"Your friend,

"AMALIA."

In the beginning of the year 1778, the dramatic company received a new recruit by the arrival of Countess Bernstorff,<sup>1</sup> whose niece had married Frau von Stein's brother (von Schardt). The countess, who had lately been left a widow, was accompanied by her man of business, Bode.<sup>2</sup>

"The day of your departure," writes Anna Amalia to Merck, "came the Countess von Bernstorff with Bode, and they are both here now. You know well all the reports that are spread about us, and to keep up our reputation of eccentricity we made both the countess and Bode pass their examination, she in acting and Bode as dramatic author. I send you herewith

<sup>1</sup> Widow of the statesman, and *née* von Stolberg.

<sup>2</sup> Bode was known as the translator of Stern and Montesquieu's works.

a prologue and some songs, etc., written by him. Bode has likewise rearranged an old French piece called *La Gouvernante*. He played the Gouvernante excellently, and Wedel made a very amusing lover. Geheimerath Schardt was his servant, while the Countess Bernstorff, Thusnelda, myself, and the little Schardt, were the pupils of the governess, who in the end took herself off and left her charges to do as they liked. This was kept very quiet, and one afternoon when we were all ready, I invited my children and the Duchess, Seckendorf, and Goethe to come out, and we played our little piece with great *éclat*."

On another occasion Bode was acting in a piece called *The Imprisoned Maiden*, a piece of American extraction, dealing with a castle that surrendered to women's wiles. Bode was the commandant of the besieging army and Commander Braun defended the castle. Bode, who was an enormous man, both in height and breadth, could not find a costume large enough to fit him, and was therefore stitched into fleshings. When the sound of the battle going on outside reached him in his tent, he rose up from his



couch, but—well, to put it gently, the sewing had given way ; therefore the curtain had to be lowered.

Also in the after-piece, *The Jealous Husband*, there was another misfortune. The part of the lover was to be played by Einsiedel, who fell ill shortly before the performance began, and his place was taken by the before-named Commander Braun, who learned his part and got Einsiedel to coach him, so that it went fairly well, especially as there was a good prompter, who promised to keep his attention on the new recruit. All went smoothly till the scene in which the lovers are surprised by the jealous husband, who is hidden behind a curtain and has to rush out when he gets his cue. This word was utterly forgotten by Braun, who was stricken with a terrible attack of stage fright. He stuttered and stuttered. The husband waited in vain.

At last, seeing there was no alternative, Bertuch (who played the part of the jealous husband) rushed forth from his concealment, sword in hand, to take his life and so make an end of it. The captain, however, was too upset to grasp this idea, and absolutely refused to be killed.

In vain Bertuch whispered in his ear : " In the devil's name why don't you die ? " Nothing would restore common sense to the distracted actor. Finally Goethe, out of all patience, called out in a stentorian voice : " If he won't die like a brave man, let him die like a coward ! Stab him in the back ! " But even this did not restore the nerves of the victim to stage fright ; he still continued stuttering, while Bertuch, stealing behind him, gave him a tremendous shove, which precipitated him on to the stage, where he lay helpless, and was borne away on a shutter amidst peals of laughter from the audience.

It had long been promised that Merck should come to Weimar in the spring of 1779.

" The duchess is counting the hours till you come," writes kind-hearted Wieland to his friend ; and then he adds, " I must really scold you for not having sent an answer to her kind invitation. You are always preaching to us that we are not sufficiently attentive to our Gracious Princess, and, as St. Paul says, behold you are now the castaway. You know, and the duchess knows also, that we are all quite silly about you, and that you can treat us as a beauty treats her lovers. Goodbye. It is

to me vexatious that when you are so near I have still to write."

Wieland's affection for his friends was a beautiful trait in his character, which for the rest appears to have been as sincere as it was loving. And yet what a Voltairean curve there is in the thin lips!

Merck's visit was highly satisfactory. He was the friend of every one, the two duchesses being included in the number of his admirers, and although this made things somewhat difficult, he managed to steer safely through, his long experience of courts naturally being in his favour.

Merck's visit over, things suddenly took a disagreeable turn. These things happen everywhere. We all know what dark days are, and it is not unpleasant to hear that royalties have to endure these changes of *temperature* as well as their subjects. Again it is Wieland who gives us a peep at Anna Amalia, who is now at Ettersburg.

"There is nothing but scraping of fiddles, blowing of cornepeans, and piping of whistles; it is enough to make the little angels in heaven sing Alleluias. It is a good thing for the dear woman that she loves all the Muses collectively."

Belvedere, Ettersburg, and Tiefurt are the country seats of the ducal family, the two last being more intimately connected with the Weimar stage. Anna Amalia resided at either one or the other during the summer and autumn seasons. Ettersburg, about an hour and a half distant from Weimar, is charmingly situated on the north side of the Ettersburg. The air there possesses that vivifying quality which is especially characteristic of the Thuringian mountains. It is a commodious but by no means palatial residence. There is a beautiful hall and a charming dining-room with a delightful gallery, where the musicians play. There are some fine pictures, and *objets d'art* in great abundance. The rooms are shown where certain royalties slept at different times ; Napoleon and Alexander, Czar of Russia, who were at Erfurt in 1808, hunted in the forest of Ettersburg, and lunched with Karl August under the shade of one of the magnificent linden trees.

The room is likewise shown where Schiller wrote one of the scenes of his *Maria Stuart*, and where he and Goethe worked together—it is pleasant to think that these two great men were free from the usual literary jealousy. It is there—

fore plain that Ettersburg has its associations, irrespective of the highly carved bedsteads in which a whole family might sleep comfortably, and which divers great personages occupied on certain occasions recorded in the guide-books.

I confess I felt more impressed when I stood in the large room, now an armoury, where Anna Amalia and her *beaux esprits* strutted their brief hour on their mimic stage. But even here the association is more with the theatre in the wood. The great beauty of Ettersburg lies in the woods which surround it, and stretch away for miles. In the autumn of the year great *battues* are now held in these woods, where in Anna Amalia's time the ladies and gentlemen of her suite amused themselves with picnics, walking parties, and all the different diversions with which a number of young and lively people turn the summer into one long holiday. Best of all, in the very centre of this delicious solitude, in the very heart of the wood, did the dear romantic nature of Anna Amalia conceive the idea of erecting a pastoral stage, whereon pastoral plays could be played. The Arcadian playhouse, as designed by this delightful duchess, is to-day pointed out to visitors.

It is easy to note the traces of the fairy ring, which was made in the thick vegetation by the cutting away of undergrowth and the clipping of overlapping branches. A regular wall of bushes, cut to the proper height, formed a partition between actors and spectators, while the natural advantages of the spot furnished a background of trees, and a carpet of green moss over which rugs were thrown, and which made decoration easy.

Look for a moment, I pray you, at that lovely copper beech, whose branches make so delicious a shade to the weary eyes of the zealous sightseer. Look well at its massive stem; you see there what knits us who live in the present to the far-away past, and to those fair ones, whose airy figures flitted through the shady woods, whose gay voices resounded from point to point, lending to this charming solitude life and animation. We seem to see this gay company, when in the glee of their hearts they laughingly inscribed, or had writ for them, those names which you and I are looking at. They will last as long as the old trees stand—though they who wrote have passed their centenary we know not where!

It must be confessed that the names are written in a very up-and-down fashion, scrawled as children would scrawl them over the bark of the old tree. Von Falk, Knebel, and Wieland are together ; a little further on a shaky hand has written Schiller, Lyncker, and Bertuch. Then we have the names of Einsiedel and Fräulein Göchhausen, and at a little distance those of Princess Caroline, the daughter of Duchess Louise and Karl August, and of Karl Alexander the late grand duke !

To return to the theatricals at Ettersburg, the wildest ebullitions of fun and humour were allowed. Here Goethe's political *Puppenspiel* was produced in honour of Anna Amalia's birthday, but it was not a surprise entertainment, for we are told the duchess got it up and worked hard to have it ready for the occasion.

In October 1776 Wieland writes to Merck :

“ The duchess is arranging to have Goethe's *Puppenspiel* at her next *fête*. Every one is busy ; Kranz with the orchestra, and Kraus with the scenery. For the last fourteen days all hands have been at work, and nearly all day, at Ettersburg. Goethe comes occasionally to see how the work is getting on, and the duchess is everywhere the

life and soul of the whole thing ; she keeps the ball rolling, and works away with her whole mind and with all her strength. I pretend to see nothing of what is going on until all is ready. This is a harmless mystification which always takes place on these occasions, and to which I submit with the best grace possible. Certainly half the court and a good many of the townsfolk play in the piece. For instance, Fräulein von Wöllwärth is the ginger-bread girl, the Schröter plays the Tyrolese, and Madame Wolf Queen Esther. I would give a gold piece that you were here to see the fun, but if you did come you would have to join the company. Goethe will have it that you will be here when the nightingales sing, and by that time he will have completed all the improvements he is making on this side of the Ilm, and which, between you and me, will cost a pretty penny. There will be a row in the Chamber when the bill comes in, but the improvements have changed this side of Weimar into an Elysium."

With one of Thusnelda's lifelike touches she paints the whole scene. "With the blessing of God we played in the new theatre Einsiedel's



version of *Le Medecin Malgrè Lui*, and afterwards Goethe's *fahrmart von Plundersweilern*, which was received with great applause by the distinguished audience. We have been three weeks hard at work, the smell of paint and the noise of hammers making a pleasant diversion; our duchess, Dr. Wolf,<sup>1</sup> Kraus, etc., tumbling over one another in their eagerness to get all finished in time." She goes on to say that Einsiedel's translation of Molière's play, which was the curtain-raiser, was admirably played, Einsiedel making a first-rate Sganarelle. Goethe was Léandre, and the Duke, Valère. This, however, was only the prologue to the event of the night, Goethe's admirable farce or *Puppenspiel*, in which he played three parts, as will be seen by the accompanying bill, which was sent by the Fräulein to Goethe's mother.

*Doktor* ... .. VON EINSIEDEL.

*Marktschreier (Town-crier)* GOETHE.

*Ahasuerus* ... .. MUSÄUS.

*Esther* ... .. MADAME WOLF.

*Hamann* ... .. GOETHE.

*Mardochai* ... .. GOETHE.

*Tyrolese peasant* ... .. CORONA SCHRÖTER.

*Pfefferkuchenmädchen (Gingerbread-seller)* ... .. FRÄULEIN VON WÖLLWÄRTH.

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Wolf, an abbreviation for Dr. Wolfgang (Goethe).



THE AUCTIONEER—GOETHE IS ON THE STILTS. THE NEWEST THING FROM PLUNDERSWEILERN, 1780.  
[p. 356.]



<i>Office porter</i>	...	...	BERTUCH.
<i>Wife to the porter</i>	...	...	DEM. PROBST.
<i>Tyrolean</i>	...	...	VON SECKENDORF.
<i>Native of Nüremberg</i>	...	...	SCHALLING.
<i>Carriage greaser</i>	...	...	VON LYNCKER.
<i>Captain of the Gypsies</i>	...	...	STEINHART.
<i>Gypsy boy</i>	..	...	SEIDLER.
<i>Peasant</i>	...	...	STEINHART.
<i>Street singer</i>	...	...	VON SECKENDORF.
<i>Wife to same</i>	...	...	MADAME STEINHART.
<i>Milk maid</i>	...	...	DEM. NEUHAUS.
<i>Savoyard with Marmot</i>	...	...	VON LYNCKER, VON TODTEN- WARDT.
<i>Butcher</i>	...	...	VON STAFF.
<i>Pork butcher</i>	...	...	VON LUCK (Kammerherr).
<i>Governess</i>	...	...	FRÄULEIN THUSNELDA—i.e., v. GÖCHHAUSEN.
<i>Demoiselle</i>	...	...	FRÄULEIN VON KOPPENFELS.
<i>Parson</i>	...	...	KRAUS.
<i>Sausage man</i>	...	...	AULHORN.
<i>Shadow</i>	...	...	AULHORN.

The audience included, in addition to the two duchesses the Crown Princess of Brunswick, who enjoyed the drollery of the farce immensely. A banquet followed, and then, to quote again from Fräulein Göchhausen: "Their high and mighties (with the exception of our duchess) took their departure, while we, the *pack of comedians*, enjoyed ourselves at a ball specially given *for us*, which

lasted till daylight made us ashamed of our revels." The *Jahrmarkt* was the first of the series of "masked plays" (or pantomimes more rightly) which became so popular. These nonsense plays, as Goethe called them, were not always in the best taste. They originated in Goethe's visit to Darmstadt in 1777. Goethe's mother writes to Anna Amalia, 1778 :

"How I should have enjoyed being present at the *Jahrmarkt von Plundersweilern*<sup>1</sup> and to hear who played in it. Fräulein Thusnelda has graciously promised to send me a full account."

On November 4th Anna Amalia replies :

"Thusnelda is sending you an elaborate account of the *fête* I gave on my birthday. Friend Wolf managed everything for me, and das *Jahrmarkt* went off splendidly. Your son sends you the score of the play as it was acted, and you will also receive a picture, the joint work of Kraus, Wolf, and myself. It is the portrait of Seckendorf as the street beggar, and is a contribution to the Weimar apartment. I am getting the songs I wrote for the piece arranged for the piano,

<sup>1</sup> The annual fair of Plundersweilern.

and so soon as they are ready, you shall have them.

“Think of me as your friend,

“AMALIA.”

Frau Aja, in sending back the picture (it was only lent for a few days), describes the effect it produced on Merck :

“GRACIOUS PRINCESS,

I return you the *Masterpiece*. It would be impossible to describe the pleasure and joy it gave me, and all those who have seen it, but I must tell you about Merck. He arrived punctually at 12 o'clock. The company to meet him were Bolling and Riese. We lunched well, and then I brought Merck to see the picture. He was amazed. I did not let him touch it, and when I saw him take out his handkerchief and rub in a corner, I just carried it away to another room. At Ahasuerus, Hamann, and Mardochai we all laughed heartily, also at the caricature of Herr Wolf with the silhouette in his hand.” There is a great charm in these letters of Frau Goethe's, the charm of simplicity. She makes no effort at being anything but herself, and even

the friendship of a duchess did not upset her mental equilibrium.<sup>1</sup>

At Ettersburg the open-air performances were constantly given by torchlight. In this manner were performed Einsiedel's operetta, *The Robbers*, also *The Gypsies*, in which Goethe collaborated with Einsiedel. (In this last a good deal was borrowed from *Götz von Berlichingen*.)

Another curious conceit of Goethe's was to write a piece after the manner of Aristophanes, in which a number of persons represented different birds, being dressed in the actual feathers of the bird they represented. They could move their heads and stretch out their wings and agitate their tails: the owls and the horned owls could roll their eyes. Wieland writes to Merck :

"We have had a strange performance at Ettersburg (in the open air), which, being well executed, had the most ludicrous effect. In addition to the intense enjoyment afforded by this Aristophanic comedy to the duke and the dowager duchess, it was pleasant to see that Goethe, in spite of all the tormenting cares of

<sup>1</sup> Frau Aja's letters are published by the Goethe Society.

his ministerial life, was able to enjoy himself like a boy. He was in excellent humour."

He adds that Corona Schröter spoke the epilogue, in which the well-known phrase so often quoted was heard for the first time: "The unspoilt favourite of the Graces."

For the birthday of Karl August, in 1782, the Duchess Amalia held high festival at Ettersburg, and a theatrical representation of the *Judgment of Paris* was given. This piece has been lost or stolen, like many others written for the private theatres of Ettersburg and Tiefurt by Goethe, such as *The Women of the Venusberg*, and *The Ratcatcher of Hamlyn*, of which only the well-known, "Ratcatcher's Song" has been preserved.

*The Gypsies*, a joint composition of Einsiedel and Goethe, referred to above, was beautifully represented. The performance took place after a hunt which had been given by the duke at Ettersburg, and the dowager duchess had invited a number of guests to witness the open-air theatricals. The carriages with the invited guests arrived at the moment that Karl August and his party in their hunting-dress were riding into the courtyard; the dowager duchess clapped



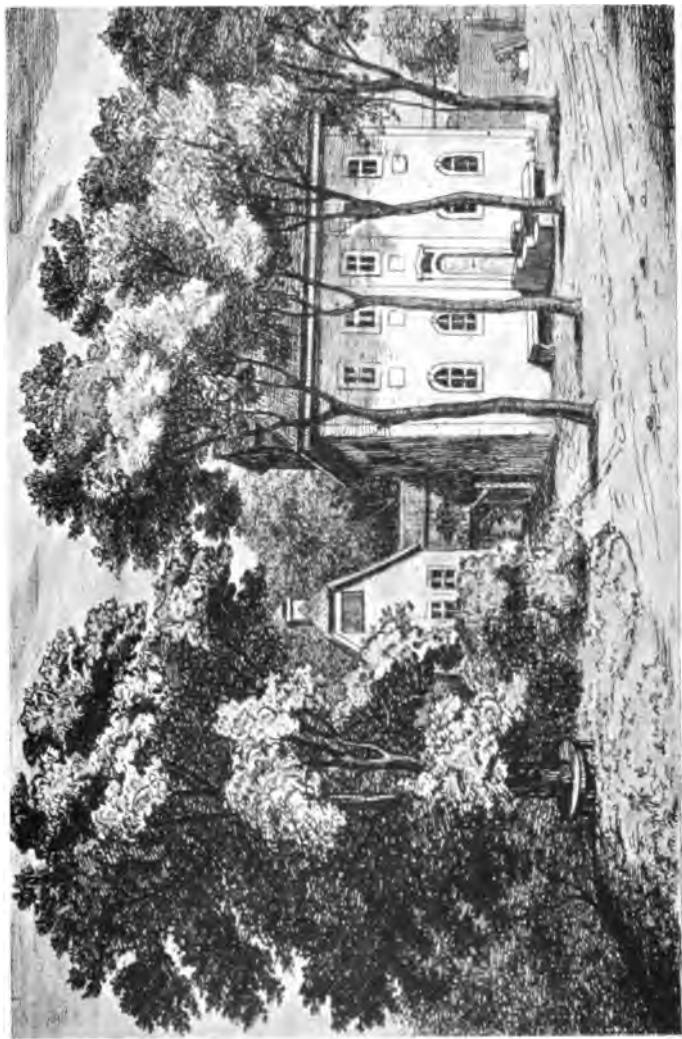
her hands; immediately on this signal a rocket went up in the woods, and like lightning a blaze of light illumined the dark shadowy trees. On the arm of her son, Anna Amalia led the way through the illuminated park, followed by guests, till they reached the theatre which Nature had formed in the woods, with thick-growing bushes for scenery. Here they found a gypsy encampment with a bright fire of sticks, upon which a kettle was boiling gypsy fashion. The zither sounded; gypsies arrive with packets of stolen goods; there is great joy. The gypsy captain, Adolar, was played by Goethe; Helarin, the heroine, by Corona Schröter. There is an oil painting at Ettersburg which represents this scene. It is by the indefatigable Kraus, who has handed down so much that recalls this golden period of Weimar.

## CHAPTER II

Situated in the quiet valley of the Ilm, where the river narrows as it runs through the mountain paths, surrounded with the greenest of meadows, embosomed in a forest of umbrageous trees, Tiefurt, so far as the house is in question, is a disappointment. One has read so much of all that went on there, that the modest country house, or rather old-fashioned farmhouse, is something of a shock. Tiefurt was originally built as a residence for the overseer or superintendent of the large farms appertaining to the estate, which now contributes a goodly portion of the ducal revenues. The situation was, however, so much to Anna Amalia's liking, its solitude so complete, its old-fashioned simplicity so attractive, that, without spending money to transform it into a royal residence, and so spoil the charm that she found in its simplicity, the duchess did merely what was necessary to make it suitable for Prince Constantine and his tutor, von Knebel.

The Becken bridge was left standing, and resting-places were made in the solitude of the far-stretching woods, rustic bridges spanned the running river, statues ornamented the grounds; while behind the house the large and beautiful park extended for miles. Walks of great length can be taken under the shade of the spreading trees, and the pedestrian of to-day at almost every step comes on some memento of the days when Tiefurt was the scene of joyous gatherings.

To Tiefurt, (after Prince Constantine ceased to reside here), Anna Amalia was wont to come in summer time, and here the fashionable society of Weimar spent many a summer's day, their gay voices resounding through the woods. The names of the fair ladies who walked here with their lovers are—many of them—carved, as at Ettersburg, on the bark of the noble trees. Memorials to artists, singers, men distinguished in various paths of life, are set up in out-of-the-way places. A moss-covered arbour on the banks of the Ilm is dedicated as a sort of temple to the goddess Thalia. In a lovely nook, shaded by the over-hanging branches of the trees, on a bank of moss over which in summer-



TIEFURT.



time grows a profusion of roses, is erected a statue to Mozart. He carries a lyre of colossal size, and on either side are the masks of comedy and tragedy with cloak and stave. The white stone rising out of the soft green moss is truly artistic, while the everflowing Ilm running at the foot of the altar chants an eternal song of praise.

I have said that the exterior of Tiefurt is disappointing, but if this feeling exists, it is amply compensated by the interest of the interior. Here we come in touch, as it were, with those who lived there: and as we walk through the quaint old house, the feeling of their actual presence follows us as we move through the rooms they once inhabited, touch the inanimate objects they used, and make comments on their mode of life.

Everything remains as it was when Anna Amalia and her circle spent the summer days in this sweet spot. Here, in a little cell or nook, so small as only to hold a table and chair, Goethe was wont to write when on a visit. The inkstand and the letter book which he used, still lie on the table, which is placed at a window overlooking the wooded landscape. Goethe loved Tiefurt

with its tranquil silence. He came here often, staying for weeks at a time. His taste was of great help to the duchess in arranging her new hobby, especially in the hanging of the pictures which cover the walls at Tiefurt. These are of different standards of excellence. Many are copies of Italian masters, made during Amalia's visit to Rome in 1788, by Bury and other artists. There are some originals by Angelica Kaufmann and Tischbein, one by Sir Joshua Reynolds of Lady Waldegrave, afterwards Duchess of Gloucester, and a portrait of Lady Coventry; also one of Lady Hamilton. The cabinets of china show beautiful specimens of Sévres and Meissen, one tea-service being the gift of Frederick the Great to his dear niece.

As in most houses of the period, these valuable specimens are mixed up with a "congratatory" of rubbish such as ladies then delighted to collect about them. Copies of paintings done in tent-stitch, framed and glazed, fans with Chinese figures pasted on cardboard, or cardboard pricked and worked in silk, and collections of shells were a great feature, as were also chairs worked in tent-stitch. Very charming is the model of a stage



GOETHE.

*From the Silhouette cut at Tiefurt, 1780.*





and theatre. One of these Goethe always had made for each piece that was acted at the theatre of Weimar.

In the dining-room there is a wonderful side-board, one side of which is an enormous wine-cooler. In the duchess's sitting-room, which is a good-sized apartment, everything remains as it was when she occupied it. In this room there are two beautiful marble busts, one of her lady-in-waiting, Charlotte von Stein, another of Goethe, by Gulanor. There is also a wonderful collection of silhouettes, then so much the fashion ; those of Karl August and Frau von Stein were cut by Goethe.

In the August of 1780, Anna Amalia had to make a journey to Brunswick to take a last farewell of her father, who died shortly after her arrival. His death grieved her much. From the time of her marriage he had associated himself closely with her and her affairs, and during her regency his advice had been of the utmost service. She therefore was much affected by this breaking of the tender tie between parent and child. She would never feel young again. Weimar and Ettersburg seemed too bright and gay for her present mood ; Tiefurt, with its shady walks and

extreme quiet, seemed more suited to her melancholy thoughts ; so to Tiefert she came rusticating.

Constantine and his tutor, Knebel, had lived here for three years. The prince was now making the grand tour. We have of late lost sight of Prince Constantine ; he has only shown himself occasionally, taking part in a hunt or theatricals, in which latter he did not distinguish himself. You can see from his portrait that he was a poor, feeble creature, weak in body and not strong mentally, for which his accident of birth was in a measure accountable. Tiresome as a child, troublesome as a boy, he retained these disagreeable qualities, and as he grew to man's estate developed a fund of eccentricity as well. Knebel, who was his tutor for years, does not seem to have possessed the firmness of character required in dealing with so curious a nature. In vain he endeavoured to infuse into his pupil's mind some higher instincts than those which led him to court the society of ballet dancers, and to drink with common louts at country inns ; Constantine smiled the flickering smile we see in his portrait, and " pulled his young moustache."

There was no rousing him, for the reason



PRINCE CONSTANTINE, SECOND SON OF DUKE ERNEST CONSTANTINE  
AND DUCHESS ANNA AMALIA.

[p. 368.]



that he had no taste, no ambition, no military instinct. He was indifferent to everything except hanging about the green-room of a theatre. This taste soon landed him in an entanglement with a second-rate actress, which was the cause of so much talk and scandal, that the duke, to get him out of the way, arranged that he should travel with Knebel. The young prince, however, refused to go, unless he had the companion he wished, and as his choice was Hofrath Albrecht, stepson to the Abbè Jerusalem, no exception could be taken. Albrecht, though a clever and excellent man, proved a somewhat dull companion, so that Constantine found his own selection a greater bore than even Knebel, and as soon as he reached Paris shook off his guardian, and plunged into all the dissipation of the most dissipated capital in Europe. From Paris he went to London, where he resided for several years, returning at last to Weimar, where he was received as the prodigal son. He resided in Weimar until 1802, when he died at the age of forty-four.

When Anna Amalia came to spend the summer of 1780 at Tiefurt he was still abroad, and this was another source of anxiety to the duchess, who had always loved *son petit Constantin*. Wieland,

who had a tender nature, was anxious about the dear woman, "who is here, with Thusnelda as her only companion. Her lady-of-honour, Frau von Stein, has gone to cool her hot blood at the waters of Pyrmont; there is no company, two servants forming the whole of the establishment."

This quiet life, without a master of the ceremonies or a casino, suited Anna Amalia's present frame of mind admirably. "One can study in peace," she writes in August to Merck.

Another attraction which Tiefurt possessed for Anna Amalia was that here, more than at any other of the royal residences, she could regulate her life as she pleased. She loved to spend the spring and summer days in this dear retreat, where she was free from the state and ceremony which hedged in life at Weimar, under the rule of Duchess Louise.

Soon after she had risen, Anna Amalia, in her morning gown, her still beautiful hair tucked carelessly away under a large straw hat, went to feed her pets, the much-prized English hens, and her pretty cooing doves. Then there were other animals to be noticed besides these special favourites. When this duty was over, the duchess strolled

leisurely, her book in her hand, to her favourite seat in the park. Here she loitered, sometimes reading, more often thinking, until the sound of a bell warned her that it was time to return to the house and get ready for the midday meal.

Her toilette did not occupy much time, and while her maid arranged her hair the letters which had come were read. Her lady-in-waiting (generally Fräulein Göchhausen) and Einsiedel dined with her, and occasionally there were strangers. Wieland was a constant guest, for Anna Amalia, who had a sincere regard for the now elderly philosopher, had given him a tiny residence in the park, where in the later years of his life he came every spring, and in this peaceful retreat wrote his later works. After dinner the duchess retired, and the rest of the household amused themselves until the bell sounded tea time. If the weather was fine tea was taken out of doors, a convenient plan in view of the number of people who usually came in the afternoon to visit the duchess. Tea was served under the shade of the trees. As every one knew that Anna Amalia detested stiffness and undue ceremony, the guests were quite at their ease and natural; and



the woods resounded with gay voices, and the air was filled with the sound of laughter ; the younger portion of the guests playing games, running races, all in the most joyous spirit. Those, however, who, either through disposition or advancing years, had no taste for such frivolity, were in no way required to exert themselves, but could sit quiet, either absorbed in contemplation or conversing with their neighbours. "Above all things let us have no social martyrs," Anna Amalia would say ; "this is Liberty Hall."

It was, however, when the day with its cares and its amusements was over, and the stillness of evening had hushed the stir and bustle which had reigned in the afternoon, that the most enjoyable time was at hand. Then, those who formed the intimate circle gathered in the drawing-room, where the time was spent either in music, which Anna Amalia loved passionately, or in turning over the pages of some new book ; and if anything was to be read aloud it was entrusted to Fräulein Göchhausen, while the other ladies worked at a large frame, in which was stretched a piece of tapestry intended by Anna Amalia as a present for her son. If the weather was unfavourable

for an evening stroll, the duchess played a game with Wieland, or perhaps he would propose to read aloud one of his manuscripts, which he had brought in his pocket. Then woe to any unreflecting person who was not properly attentive, or who ventured to whisper or make an interruption of any kind ; the irascible author would burst into an angry tirade, put his paper back in his pocket and retire into his shell, where he remained unmoved alike by the most abject apologies from the offending party, or by Anna Amalia's soothing words until the appearance of the supper tray, when the clouds cleared away and a most enjoyable interchange of thought on every subject followed.

At such moments Anna Amalia was at her best. She showed the rich stores of her mind, not ostentatiously or with the air of a blue-stocking, but talked with much simplicity upon all subjects from the highest philosophy to some *jeu d'esprit*, which she appreciated with all the quickness of an intelligent nature. Her reminiscences, of remarkable people she had met and episodes of her life, were of the deepest interest. Neither was she always in this mood. Amalia

was, like all sensitive people, very responsive to her surroundings, and an uncongenial element among those about her produced the effect that a breath of cold air has on a musical instrument, it put her out of tune—or perhaps out of harmony would be the better expression.

Yet, in regard to the life at Tiefurt or elsewhere, it is not for a moment to be supposed that it was Elysium. A state of Elysium cannot be expected to exist where men and women are in daily contact. Philosophers they might be, but the proverb, which tells us that, if we “Scratch the Russian, etc.,” applied here as elsewhere: we might exemplify this by an Eastern proverb, “Where there is much light there are many shadows.” Goethe has demonstrated this in his Rembrandtesque effects, and such effects can be made on the human canvas. The highly gifted men and women who formed such a remarkable circle in Weimar, were apt, even at Anna Amalia’s evening reception, to fall into discussions in which their uncontrolled passions often made them forget the presence of their hostess and her ladies. “Wieland’s ill-humoured criticism, Herder’s biting persiflage, Knebel’s uncontrollable temper, and

above all Goethe's dictatorial manner, each of these acting upon one another often caused such an explosion as required all Amalia's powers of soothing to restore even a semblance of tranquillity."

Having arranged to spend a portion of the year at Tiefurt, Anna Amalia made herself acquainted with her surroundings, and, as was her custom, strove to render all the people round her happy and content, in which endeavour she was seconded by Frau Aja, than whom none understood better how to help in such a work.

Wieland, writing to Merck, gives us a picture of life at Tiefurt. "Our dear good Duchess Amalia is rustivating here since Prince Constantine has gone to travel. I circulate between my writing desk, my garden, and Tiefurt. . . . You may be sure that nothing short of some very rough treatment on your part (which I have no reason to expect) will ever put an end to her friendship for you, which is true and sincere. She is really one of the best women on God's earth, and I doubt very much whether, in her position of life, you will find another with such a heart and head, or one with whom people of our station in life can associate, and yet preserve

the right to their own individual opinions. For my part, I should be the most ungrateful wretch between heaven and earth, if I could forget all the kindness she has shown me and mine, and how she has assisted in making the happiness of my life. I assure you that I have no idea how I should survive this dear princess, if I live to my seventieth year."

Amalia's disposition was so instinct with life and the desire for progress, that she infused the same qualities into those about her.

Wieland in 1782 acknowledges that "Up to now the dowager duchess has been our great helper; without her Weimar would ere now have sunk into as insignificant, wearisome and soul-annihilating a nest as any in Germany."

Wieland was evidently in a bad temper with the duke and his *Geheimerath* when he gave vent to this ebullition; not that I am disparaging the effect of Anna Amalia's judicious help and always ready sympathy: she had her own troubles and made head against them bravely, finding, as she tells us, in music a veritable angel of consolation in hours which otherwise would have been dreary.

"It is a cordial for the black vapours," she writes to Knebel, "and it is written in the Bible that King Saul drove away black melancholy with musical instruments. You must not think, however, dear Knebel, that I am in Saul's condition of mind."

Writing to Knebel after her return from Worlitz (from whence she brought a new plan for improving the grounds at Tiefurt, by growing yew and laurel hedges) she says :

"Hardly have I arrived here when I am full of beginning my new plans. My poor Tiefurt is astonished at my grand ideas, and indeed my hands are full. I took the Bosquet, which was in a terrible condition, in hand, and have brought it to so good a state that neither fauns nor nymphs need now be ashamed to take up their residence there."

Of course, Amalia had the usual feminine craze of the period for writing those long, crossed and sometimes recrossed letters, written in palest ink on quarto paper, which was folded in four and sealed with red or black wax. They were all kept carefully in their cases ; and well that it was so, for what a fund of interest we of the present day have found

in these dusty boxes ; how the publication of their contents have upset all we have learned in our youth as to Mary Queen of Scots and many others, and what delightful reading they have been. There are no such letter-writers now-a-days, and most people tear up their letters, so there will be no turning out of tin boxes for the benefit of succeeding generations.

"On August 11th, 1781," Wieland writes, "the Weimar circle, Goethe included, came here for the Harvest Festival, and on the 12th there was also an entertainment for the country folk."

On August 16th the following announcement appeared. It brings us in touch with what Anna Amalia called her little joke.

<sup>1</sup> "A society of learned men, artists, poets, and politicians of both sexes, have joined together with the view of bringing out a new periodical, in which all that is noteworthy in the politics, wit, talent, and intellect of this remarkable age is to be laid before a select public.

"The title of this proposed publication is to be *The Journal or Diary of Tieffurth*, and it is intended that it shall resemble as closely as possible the well-known and popular *Journal de Paris*, with this difference, that, instead of being a daily issue, it will appear but once a week. The copies can be either bought for

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<sup>1</sup> A translation of the original published for the first time in 1892 in the *Tieffurth Journal* collected by the Goethe Society with an introduction by Herr Bernard Suphan.

ready money (nothing less than a gold coin will be taken), or in return for MS. contributions. The first number will appear at the end of the present week.

"TIEFURT, *August 15th, 1781.*"

The author of this flourish (which Merck ridiculed with fine irony) was Einsiedel, who had just returned from Karlsbad. He occupied the post of editor, his secretary being "The Gnomide," otherwise Fräulein Göchhausen, who proved an excellent assistant, with her "mobile pen" and her very reliable qualities.

"Whether the idea of the journal was first broached on the day of the Harvest Festival, or, as I rather think," writes Herr Suphan, "on a previous date, it belongs to the plans for cultivating constant cheerfulness, which the duchess Anna Amalia desired to promote."

"It is a little joke of mine for passing the summer." These are the words with which she introduces the parcel of the journal which she sends to Frau Aja in the beginning of November. "It has succeeded so well," she goes on, "that we are to continue it, and perhaps what I send you will give you some pleasant moments."

This statement is confirmed word for word in a letter written by Goethe to his mother two years



later, sending her a large parcel of the journal. "This weekly journal was begun by way of a joke, when the duchess dowager was living last year at Tiefurt" (he is wrong in the date), "and since then has been continued. There are some excellent things in it, and you will find it well worth looking through."

"It was started for the amusement of a literary circle," says the editor of Herder's *Fragmentary Papers*. In this collection, published in 1785, were several of Herder's contributions, which had not appeared in the original collection. Likewise we learn that in the imaginary conversations between Theomo and Demoder, "Theomo" was Caroline Herder and "Demoder" Herder.

Herder's folk-songs were received with delight, also his letters on theology and Hebrew poetry. A still warmer reception was given to his "Ideas on the Philosophy of the History of Mankind," 1785. Musäus contributed his legendary or fairy tales in 1782, Wieland who was busy editing the *Merkür*, and writing his *Oberon*, also contributed some excellent translations.

The *Tiefurter Journal* had declared its intention of following in the track of the *Journal de Paris*

which had been founded ten years previously, and had a high reputation. The French journal appeared every Sunday, four pages large quarto. "One can still read this excellent paper with pleasure. Besides the astronomical charts and the Exchange news which it regularly included, there was a regular staff of contributors who provided well-written articles upon such subjects as botany, medicine, engravings, administration, and public matters. There were likewise announcements of family events, and small instalments of fashionable news."

The advertisement of the *Tiefurter Journal* specially mentioned that the contributors were to be of both sexes. Weimar had always extended recognition to women writers, and in the celebrated circle of Sentimentalists, women like the Landgräfin of Hesse, Sophie de la Roche, etc., were highly considered. Henrietta von Egloffstein, who came to Weimar in 1787, alludes to the extraordinary intellectual force of the women. "They head the regiment," she says, "but they do not overstep due limits."

To the *Tiefurter Journal* Anna Amalia, we are told, contributed the somewhat lengthy and

decidedly dull tale of "Cupid and Psyche." She translated it with the assistance of Wieland from the Italian. The Gnomide writes to Knebel on St. Martin's Day 1783, sending him a copy of the journal, which she says is especially good.

"The poem 'Remembrance' is by the little Schardt, and the 'Alphabet of Love' by Emilia von Werthern. The rest of the number is from Herder's pen." Caroline Herder was also a contributor, but Sophie von Schardt's little poem excited Goethe's admiration. He writes to Knebel :

"There is a poem called 'Remembrance' in the current number of the journal. Do you know who wrote it?"

In this small circle and under the veil of anonymity, several poetesses, shrinking from publicity (for we are dealing with a period, when for a woman, especially in the days of her youth, to seek publicity was an offence against propriety), made their first *début* in literature by means of some poem or tale.

Herr Suphan is right when he says there was an immeasurable distance between these blue-stockings and the girl-graduates of our day. Could

even these ladies, who were so well instructed in letters and the arts, have passed a Girton examination? "I hae my doots," as the canny Scot said. As a fact, and taken all round, their capabilities were modest enough, although sufficient for the standard of the day. They shone, however, in their correspondence.

"One has to read the letters of these women to realise their charm. What freshness of thought, what freedom of expression! Here we have a clear perception of the beautiful nature working freely, unrestrainedly, in perfect activity."

Herr Suphan gives as an example of this expansion of mind—Fräulein Göchhausen's letters to Knebel. One especially he tells us he has often quoted. In it she refers to the difficulty of expressing one's thoughts in writing.

"The letters seem so cold and inanimate, as contrasted with the image presented to the mind. Ach, Gott! for one evening here with you, sitting by the fire in your little corner room. Through the window we can see the branches of the poplar trees waving, and the long yellow meadow grass flying like lightning through the bushes. Ah! for such an evening now. I would throw

all my letter paper into the fire, and make a great flame in the chimney, which would burn brightly.

"TIEFURT, *September 16th, 17* ."

I wish space allowed me to quote Herr Suphan's interesting account of the Court of Weimar at this period ; also of the passion then existing for everything French. At the court of Berlin no other language was permitted, and some German writers, wishing to please the great Frederick, wrote in this borrowed tongue. To the credit of our Weimar circle of *litterateurs*, they never adopted this fashion, and it was due to the great personality of Goethe and his fidelity to his own tongue, that this degrading practice was abandoned throughout Germany.

In a letter of Villoison's to Knebel, written on May 22nd, 1782, he records the impressions he received during the first weeks of his stay at the Court of Weimar. "Nothing can equal the intelligence and the genius of Madame la Duchesse Mère, or her amiability, her affability, and her kindness. Mademoiselle Göchhausen has much grace, delicacy, and a beautiful mind. Mesdames Stein and Schardt are serious and deep

thinkers. But what a court it is! so full of intellectuality and knowledge, and yet so artistic. The great ladies of the court instruct their children in painting." He concludes with this trite remark on the reigning Duchess Louise: "She is as anxious to conceal the extent of her knowledge as others are to display it."

Anna Amalia could not help giving a sly dig at this all-round admirer. She writes to Knebel, "But *I also* am a Princess *full of genius*. What do you think of that?" Nevertheless, Villoison (whom Karl August thought to be an honest man) was quite sincere in his praises of this wonderful court. An unknown visitor to Weimar in 1784, said to be a Hanoverian count, and who was received at court, is even more enthusiastic than the French visitor. Herr Suphan does not for lack of space quote all this count said, but he makes special mention of Countess von Werthern for her charm of manner, natural, unrestrained, courteous and amusing. But this, he adds, is the "tone" at Weimar, and it "was in the company of such women that Goethe, Herder, and Wieland took delight."

"The journal has now appeared in medium

quarto size. It is the celebrated *Tiefurter Journal*."

In these words Anna Amalia, who is jubilant over the news, sends Knebel a copy. The duchess was in good spirits, but this had nothing to do with the success of the journal of which, to speak frankly, beyond the circle of contributors and their friends (who were not of much use financially), the sale was extremely small. There were Goethe's mother and his Zurich friend, Bade Schulthess, but for these foreigners special copies had to be prepared.

As a commercial speculation the *Tiefurter Journal* was not satisfactory, the outlay being in excess of the receipts; but it was never meant to be a source of profit, it was Anna Amalia's "joke," and as such had succeeded *à ravir*. On the other hand, it cost something to produce, and the sale was practically *nil*. Wieland made some mild jokes over the financial embarrassments of the editor.

"The times are hard," writes Thusnelda, and Wieland (Merkür) amuses himself by twitting the much-worried editor. "I have heard nothing from you of late," he says maliciously.

Karl August communicates to Merck his ideas on the subject, October 1782. "We have nothing but bad news from Tiefurt. The report is that the amateurs, connoisseurs, and men of letters have grown rotten, and the odour is so bad that one can smell it thirty miles away." This was a side thrust at Darmstadt as well as Tiefurt. Certain dates and letters, together with Knebel's diary, have established the fact, not known till 1896, that the *Tiefurter Journal* ran its course for three years, 1781-84. Sometimes it was issued monthly in place of weekly.

There were of course (as in all amateur undertakings) certain irregularities, as, for example, when, in 1781, a fearful epidemic of influenza swept over Weimar. Moreover, the dowager duchess's absences, on visits and the like, caused interruptions; for, not only was she the moving spirit, but she also took with her the editor, Einsiedel, and the secretary, Fräulein Göchhausen. September and October 1782 she spent at Dessau, and in the autumn of 1783 she stayed for six weeks at the Court of Brunswick with her brother, the reigning duke. On her return the journal was resumed.

The beginning of the last year of the journal



was remarkable for the excellence of the contributions. Towards the end, however, a marked decadence set in, when apparently Einsiedel was the only "moving spirit." "It was a bad sign," says Herr Suphan, "that his prize questions, which he started in No. 35, evidently with a view to arouse interest, met with no replies." The number printed on the last issue is 49, but it would seem that there were only 47 issues of the journal. The collapse of this undertaking was much to be regretted, but it only furnishes another instance of how necessary it is in all such enterprises to have a professional manager, who understands the work of editing, pushing and making things go.

Amongst the contributors to the journal was Karl August, who wrote various pieces, amongst others an account of the birth, life, and death of Minerva, as shown in the shadow play which he highly commends. Goethe in the beginning wrote some beautiful odes, but latterly, having so much on hand, he seems to have given up contributing. Many of the charades and short poems were written by Prince Augustus of Gotha, who had a pleasing talent for verse-making. One of the best stories is "Der Ritter Eckbert." Of this Knebel writes :

"If we only knew the writer, we would present him with a vote of thanks for thus holding up human nature as in a magic glass." As a humorous piece, Seckendorf's "Incident in the life of Herr von Giks Zrun Gakelstein" is very diverting. It is much in the manner of the "Ingoldsby Legends," and possibly suggested them. Anna Amalia wrote some pretty verses and Einsiedel was a constant contributor; at the close he appears to have been the only one.

A great feature of the journal was the prize questions. One of those propounded was "How can a set of people who have nothing to do avoid *ennui*?" The answers which are given are clever and witty. At the close of the three years people had grown tired of the questions, and Einsiedel confesses that when he propounded one he received no answers.

### CHAPTER III

TIEFURT being a small house, there was not sufficient accommodation for Anna Amalia's personal suite, to say nothing of the guests which her hospitable nature rendered a necessity. Her ingenuity, however, was equal to the occasion. The guest rooms originally were few, but some of them were large. These were divided into two, and where it was practicable a third room was likewise partitioned off, this being only a tiny compartment, merely capable of holding a small bed and table. Recesses were made in the passages by curtains which could be let down, and here the ladies-in-waiting could entertain a friend in private with a cup of tea.

Fräulein Göchhausen had a small bedroom to herself, and here a very unkind trick was played upon her by Goethe, in which I regret to say Anna Amalia took part ; but, as before mentioned, practical joking had become a regrettable feature

of court society. The joke in question was, considering the delicate physique of Thusnelda, decidedly ill-advised. Fräulein Göchhausen was on a certain day despatched to Weimar to execute commissions for the duchess. These occupied her till late in the evening, when she returned to Tiefurt.

Meantime her absence had been made use of by the duchess and Goethe to have the door of Thusnelda's bedroom taken off its hinges, and the space, which was a very narrow one, filled up and paper pasted over. When poor Fräulein Göchhausen returned every one was in bed, a light being left as usual in the hall. But as she ascended the staircase the light was blown out, as she thought by a gust of wind. It was very dark, so she put her hands on the wall and groped her way, seeking the door of her room, but could find nothing of the sort—it was all one flat surface.

Thusnelda was puzzled, and thought she must be on the wrong side somehow. It suddenly occurred to her to fetch the maid who slept on this landing, but she found that the maid's bed was empty. Again Thusnelda groped with both hands along the surface of the wall, but no door

could she find. She called out—no answer. She screamed—no one came. Strangely enough, although she was accustomed to have tricks played upon her, and in her turn played many a trick on others, the idea never occurred to her that she was the victim of a practical joke. At last she lost all control of herself and in her excitement grew hysterical, when, apparently by accident, some one came with a light, and conducted the poor worn-out Thusnelda to a room that had been provisionally got ready for her.

Another joke was perpetrated by Anna Amalia on a large scale, and the fact that Goethe was included amongst the number of the hoaxed would point to Thusnelda having suggested the trick, which was not quite after the duchess's manner. A select party, including the *Geheimerath*, were invited to dinner, and as the duchess's cook was excellent and her wines of the best, all her invitations were gladly accepted. When the covers were removed a splendid feast met the gaze of the guests; everything that was in season was on the table, but, when they tried to eat—good heavens! the coveted dainties were only painted imitations! It was a true Barmecides' banquet.

The select party of *litterateurs* and counsellors tried to laugh, but their faces betrayed their disappointment and indignation. Fortunately, it was only momentary, for in an adjoining room another repast was ready to console the deluded guests. We do not hear how Goethe liked being tricked in this way, but we may be sure Fräulein Göchhausen's shrill laugh was not wanting.

The dinner of wood just as it was served a hundred and twenty years ago, is one of the curiosities of Tiefurt. It can be seen in the old kitchen, and is one of the attractions to tourists.

Tiefurt, like Ettersburg, has also a close connection with the history of the stage of Weimar, of which I have in the preceding chapter essayed, with the help of the best German authorities, to give my readers a short account. It was in the year 1781 that the dramatic life of Tiefurt was called into existence by the indefatigable duchess. At first there was a divergence of opinion as to the prospect of success in starting a theatre similar to that at Ettersburg, and so many contrary opinions were given as to where it should be, in case it was decided to have one, that Anna Amalia, tired of the discussion, gave up the idea,

and contented herself with what was called in jest the Academy of Music. The members of the Academy included such musicians as Corona Schröter and Fräulein von Rudorf; also the best musical amateurs in Weimar joined this so-called academy, which held its meetings at the *Witt-humshaus*, music being only the pretext for a good deal of fun and flirtation.

When the hot days of August came the musical jesters grew somewhat limp; every one pined for open-air amusements, and Anna Amalia, who was always a promoter of healthy pleasures, revived the idea of an open-air theatre at Tiefurt, where she intended to pass the summer. This idea being warmly seconded, the first thing was to choose the site for the theatre. This was soon done, the lovely woods having many secluded spots, where nature had provided an amphitheatre suitable to the purpose. One of these, called *La Petite Coulisse*, was unanimously chosen, and it was agreed that the first performance should be given in honour of Goethe's birthday, on August 18th.

The piece chosen was *Minerva's Birth, Life, and Actions*, written by Sigismund von Seckendorf, a play well suited to the natural advantages of the

open-air stage. Minerva's birth was, as we know, peculiar, and it would strike us as being somewhat difficult to represent. The piece was, however, of the kind called *ombres palpitantes*, as distinguished from the *ombres chinoises* which were merely shadows thrown by means of a magic lantern across a screen. The *ombres palpitantes* were, as the name imports, *breathing* or "palpitating" shadows. In other words, the reflection of the *actors and actresses* was thrown on the sheet or screen, with all their movements and gestures, which corresponded with the words they spoke. In some instances there may have been a diaphanous screen, through which the actors were seen.

This form of shadow play was very popular, having been introduced by Duke George of Meiningen. Corona Schröter excelled in it by means of her graceful attitudes.

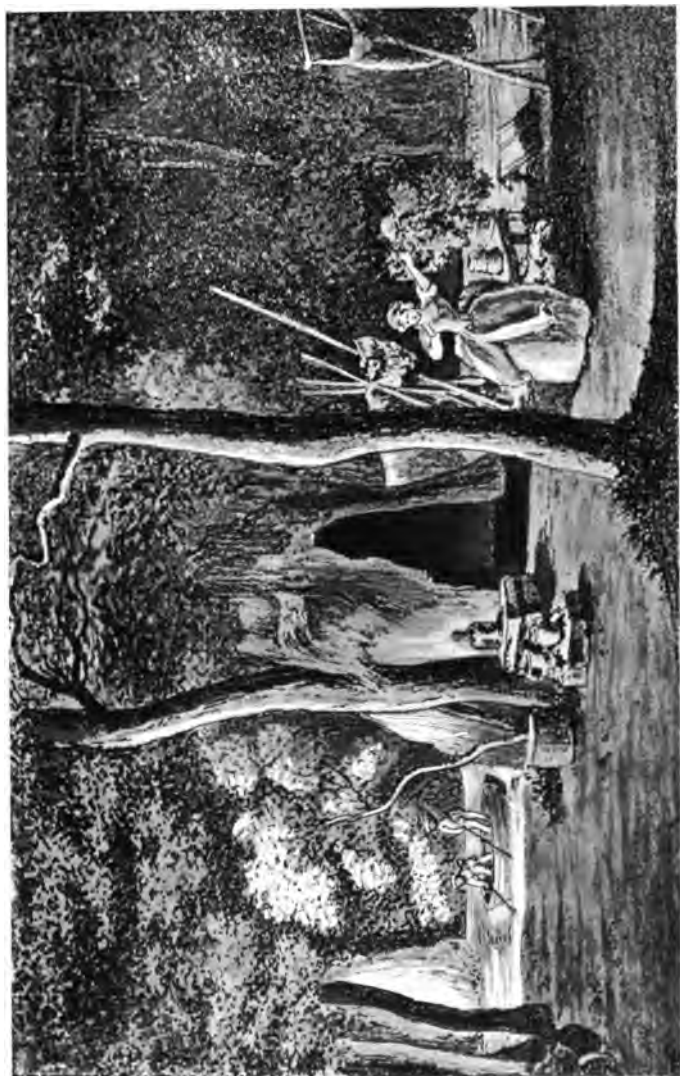
I will not fatigue my readers with an account of Minerva's adventures, which are told at length in the *Tiefurter Journal*, but merely refer to the final tableau, when, in a silver cloud or halo, appeared the name of "Goethe," to which a gold crown was presented by Minerva, (personated by Corona Schröter), followed by Apollo, who offered



his lyre, and the Nine Muses garlands of flowers, while in the sky appeared the words "Iphigenia" and "Faust," surrounded by a golden halo.

Thus was the open-air stage at Tiefurt consecrated to the Muses, and from this time it became the birthplace of many new developments, one strong point of interest being that here was produced an altogether new conception of *Faust* taken from the original Saga, or myth. Another favourite shadow play was *Midas*.

For Tiefurt, Goethe wrote "A Wood and Water Piece," called *The Fisher Maiden*, the music for which was composed by Corona Schröter, whose setting of the *Erl King* was much admired, the *Erl King* being one of the characters introduced into the piece. The place chosen was on the banks of the Ilm near the bridge, which was illuminated by countless torches and lamps. A number of fishermen's huts were erected on the bank, and fishermen's boats, nets, and other implements connected with their trade were scattered about the shore. The cottage of Dörnchen (Corona Schröter) is in flames; the fishermen assemble from all parts; a flotilla of boats appears simulta-



SCENE FROM "THE FISCHER MADCHEN."

*From a Drawing by Kraus.*



neously on the river, while the whole scene becomes ablaze with light, which is as suddenly extinguished, everything being left in darkness till the end of the piece, when the stage is again bathed in light. This effect of light and shade was very striking. "The beautiful evening, the music and the illumination," writes Thusnelda, "made an enchanting spectacle."

Unfortunately, the crowd of spectators who gathered on the wooden bridge to see the illuminations, was too much for so slight a support, and the bridge broke. There were, however, no fatalities; every one took the diversion in good part and laughed at what was a joke, but might have been a tragedy. The great charm of these open-air plays lay in the effect of the light and shade produced by the illuminations and the dark green of the background.

If one might venture to criticise so distinguished a company as the Weimar actors, we might complain of the excessive number of performances, to say nothing of the expense, which was entirely defrayed from the private purse of the duke and Anna Amalia. There must have been great danger of wearying the audience by

too frequent entertainments. *Reculer pour mieux sauter* is an excellent motto to be observed in most things. Naturally this observation would not apply in the case of masterpieces by Goethe ; it may be doubted whether these were always done full justice to. We have, however, in this matter to bow to the verdict of those who witnessed these amateur performances, albeit their judgment may have been warped by friendship, and in some instances probably influenced by the position of the actors.

Goethe's nonsense pieces were always delightful, and, as a rule, the company were equal to the rendering of these. The same welcome, however, was not accorded to the pieces written by Knebel, or to those adapted by Einsiedel and Seckendorf.

Goethe's penetration grasped the fact that one may grow weary of even the choicest wit, and that novelty is an absolute craving of humanity. He therefore looked about for something new and in this year (1781) introduced masques, the first being given on the festival of the Three Kings, which is the German equivalent for our Twelfth Day. There was a brilliant gathering at court, including the Prince of Meiningen. "Epiphania," an ode to

Christmas, by Goethe, was sung by three singers in costume, Corona Schröter representing the first king. Her song began : "I am the first and the wisest, and likewise the most beautiful." This masque having mightily pleased "the High and Mighties," a second took place, on January 30th, in honour of the Duchess Louise's birthday, and as *l'appetit vient en mangeant*, so the wish for novelty made society eager for another. Accordingly we hear of preparations for a splendid masque called "Winter," which was given in the *Redoute* on February 16th. Herr von Stein was a splendid figure as "Winter," Frau von Stein appeared as "Night," and Goethe as "Sleep."

Soon, however, the languor which had for the moment been banished by the new excitement, reappeared. Anna Amalia writes to Knebel, December 1781 : "I am like a driver, who is for ever whipping his horses to get them out of the mud, into which they and the cart are for ever slipping, but alas ! they will stand stock still and no efforts are of avail. There is much talk of new plays, comedies, etc., but nothing definite is arranged. I have settled that the Weimar Theatre shall open on November 24th, with a shadow play,

which will represent the story of King Midas. What other novelties may follow I cannot at present tell you."

The ever popular story of King Midas seems to have done well, but still the cloud does not appear to have passed away, for in this same month, 1782, we find Karl August writing: "Here everything seems to be out of joint. Goethe looks pale and bilious, and does not know what to be at." And Goethe also complains to his friend Merck: "Since the beginning of the year there has been a constant round of theatricals and *redoutes*. I am thoroughly sick of continually turning the axle, and my soul wearies of this and many other matters." Also Fräulein von Göchhausen pipes her little complaint. She, too, is weary (as well she may have been, and with more reason than the somewhat spoilt author). Listen to poor Thusnelda. "Plays, balls, masques, *redoutes*, etc., all succeed one another in the race for amusement, and friend Goethe has handed his gold chain of office to another shepherd, who has arranged for the birthday of the duchess Louise a new ballet, with a charming story and interludes of songs and dances, concluding with a wonderful ballet."

Three days before the performance the stage manager, Mieding, died. Goethe's beautiful poem, entitled "Mieding's Death," appeared in the *Tiefurter Journal*.

"Goethe is very busy," writes Fräulein von Göchhausen; "he has finished *Egmont* and is now writing *Tasso*." This love of work was a symptom that the round of amusement, which was sapping his best energies, was about to come to an end. Signs and tokens of weariness were showing themselves likewise in the duke. Meantime the building of a regular theatre in Weimar began to be talked about amongst the amateurs. This idea, at first merely a subject of conversation, developed later into the theatre, which, under the management of Goethe and Schiller, earned a world-wide fame. But this is looking rather far ahead.

The first step which led to the grand result was, as is often the case, taken by an outsider, a certain Herr Hauptmann, who filled the office of master of the hounds in the duke's household. He was supposed to be wealthy and was fond of speculating, and as a speculation started building a large hall suitable for *redoutes*



or other amusements. There was a garden at the back, where on summer evenings open-air entertainments and illuminations after the pattern of Vauxhall could take place. Hauptmann found his building expensive, and to defray the charges borrowed large sums from the duke's treasury on the house itself, which, as it soon appeared that the builder was in bad circumstances, fell a bargain to Karl August, who was the largest creditor. Soon all the necessary arrangements were made. Here Anna Amalia had a fine room, where in the winter season the plays, which were now a feature of Weimar society, could be given. The *redoutes* could be held in the same apartment. The seats and barriers were movable, so were the stage and the pit: a fine hall was then left where every one could dance till morning.

Following the inevitable law of change, the amateur company which had done such good work began to fall away. In 1784 a troop of German comedians were invited to come to Weimar under the management of Bellomo. This was a deathblow to the amateurs, and was much deplored by the dowager duchess. She writes sorrowfully: "Every one here is asleep." She was,



**THEATRE OF WEIMAR, BUILT BY HAUPTMANN, 1779. IT WAS ENLARGED AND DECORATED BY GOETHE 1798, AND WAS CONSUMED BY FIRE 1825.**



**THE PRESENT THEATRE, BUILT 1830, FROM STEINER'S DESIGN.**

[p. 402.]



however, a woman of resource, and speedily found her consolation in studying Greek.

Clouds now began to darken the horizon of Weimar, and threw their shadows over Amalia's life. She was disappointed that, do what she would, the *rapprochement* she wished for did not come to pass between her and her daughter-in-law, who, although always respectful towards her husband's mother, still kept outside the barrier she had erected between herself and Anna Amalia. "A lump of ice that there is no thawing," was the verdict of our genial duchess. Neither were the relations between the royal couple very satisfactory; their disappointment in the matter of the wished-for heir embittered matters.

Goethe too was troubled about many things. That he had lost much of his popularity affected him little, for he could be well satisfied with the tangible advantages he had received; in addition to the dignity of Geheimrath conferred upon him by Karl August, the Emperor Joseph II. ennobled him in 1781. Karl August was afraid to break the news of this dignity to the burgher's son, and it was Anna Amalia who undertook to inform Goethe of the honour conferred on him. His

biographer says: "As he had been six years at court without a patent of nobility, he may have felt the *necessity* as rather an insult." This was not, however, the view taken by the nobility of Weimar and Eisenach, who regarded the bestowal of this honour on the son of a Frankfurt citizen as a scandalous outrage on their privileges. "The hatred of people here," writes Wieland, "against our Goethe, who has done no one any harm, has risen to such a height since he has been made *Geheimerath*, that it borders on fury."

The duke, however, paid no heed to the opposition. He was more than ever "the friend of his friend," and Goethe repaid his confidence. It was Goethe who suggested, in view of various complications which now arose, and which have nothing to do with our narrative, that a short absence would cut the root of the evil, and Karl August eagerly grasped at the suggestion. The court, and even Anna Amalia, supposed that a visit to Frankfurt and Cassel was to be the extent of the journey. Karl August writes to Anna Amalia from Frankfurt September 19th, 1779:

"Best of mothers, I am writing from Goethe's house, where I am staying. Goethe's mother

is a splendid woman, I rejoice to be with her. Nothing particular since I wrote. Everything goes well. Last night there were some wonderful Northern Lights."

The arrival of the travellers at Rath Goethe's house in Frankfurt is delightfully told by Frau Aja,<sup>1</sup> in one of her letters to Anna Amalia.

"FRANKFURT, *September 24th*, 1779.

"Our gracious and best prince (Karl August) got out of his carriage a few doors up the street. (This on purpose to surprise us.) He opened the door of the house noiselessly, and came into the blue drawing-room. Now imagine me, Frau Aja, sitting at the round table, when the door suddenly opens and, in a second, Haschelhans' (*i.e.*, Goethe's) arms are round my neck, the duke standing in a corner so as not to interfere with a mother's joy; and there he remained until Frau Aja, almost intoxicated with joy, and hardly knowing what

<sup>1</sup> The name Frau Aja has its origin in the *Hermonkindern*, a child's story. It was given to Goethe's mother by the Stolbergs, who were staying at her house in Frankfurt. Wieland, in one of his letters, alludes to the origin of the name. "Our best greetings to Frau Mutter Aja." The *first* great Frau Aja could neither read nor write, and yet she was Rheinhold's mother. Rheinhold was one of the Hermons children. Frau Rathin liked the name so much that she always used it.

she was doing, greeted her good prince as well as she was able, and also the handsome Wedel, who took his share in the universal joy. Then came the entrance of the father. I feared the joy of seeing his son would kill him, and even to this very day on which his highness has left us, he is not quite himself. Neither am I much to speak of. Your highness can well imagine what the joy of these days has been. Merck came, and acquitted himself on the whole well ; but he can never leave his cloak of Mephistopheles at home, he is so accustomed to wear it. Against the usual custom, but in accordance with the duke's wish, there was no prince or princess at supper."

She then gives an account of the different entertainments which the duke and Goethe attended, and then goes on :<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Katherine Elizabeth Goethe, daughter of Rath Johann Wolfgang Textor, Imperial judge or magistrate, was born February 1731, in Frankfurt on Main, married March 17th, 1748, Johann Caspar Goethe, became a widow 1782, and died September 1798. She was a woman remarkable for many gifts, and, although she could not spell correctly, her mental powers were recognised by the most remarkable men of a remarkable period. Wieland called her the "Queen of women, and the crown of her sex." Einsiedel says that her whole appearance made a wonderful impression. Merck, the satirical scoffer, declares he is proud because she calls him her son. Prince George of Wurtemberg pronounced her to be the only



GOETHE'S MOTHER, "FRAU AJA."

[p. 406.]





"Dearest princess, pardon this cold letter, which, in consideration of the subject, is dry and short. It is impossible for me to make it better. I feel all day as if I were drunk with joy. I am delirious, and not until I come back to real life will my senses return to me. Until then Frau Aja entreats your highness to have patience with her. We have no other thought but our present joy, and the thought that, although they are leaving us, they will return, and then the joy will fill my heart again. God grant they return happy and well, then shall they drink the best Rhine wine in splendid tumblers specially ordered. If your highness only knew how often I think of you with tears of joy in my eyes, how often I speak

woman worthy of being Goethe's mother. The power exercised by this extraordinary woman over others was remarkable. Writing to Frau von Stein, she says: "I thank God that by His grace no human being has gone away from me discontented—of whatever position or sex they may have been." An eternal spring and bright sunshine surrounded this joyous nature. She could bear every trial well. "Joyfulness," she cried, like Götz von Berlichingen, "is the mother of all virtues"—and another saying was "He who laughs much can have no deadly sins on his conscience." And yet this fine-hearted woman had met trials enough to sadden her. A weary life it must have been attending upon her invalid husband, whose fretful temper made him at all times "ill to live with."

of you, how often Frau Aja blesses the day when the best of princesses gave to her beloved country such a ruler as Karl August. When she thinks of all this and much more, Frau Aja can only go into a corner and let the joy of her heart express itself in happy, happy tears. And all I know and feel is that the best of all princesses has given to us ineffable joy. This is only a little sketch of days which, to quote Werther, God spares to His saints, that they may take their burden again on their shoulders and tramp about the world with it, the remembrance of the happy hours allowed to them making it light to carry.

“Now, most august princess, keep us in your gracious memory. The father commends himself to you, and Frau Aja will live and die,

“Your Royal Highness’s

“Obedient and most humble servant,

“K. E. GOETHE.”

Soon Karl August writes to Anna Amalia :

“What will you say? Instead of going to-morrow to Düsseldorf, as we had arranged, we are starting for Switzerland.<sup>1</sup> This will displease

<sup>1</sup> Wieland’s kindly sympathetic nature stands out in pleasant contrast to the bitterness which filled the minds of many of

you a little, but I hope not much ; and soon you will rejoice with us. I have enjoyed myself here. I think I have astonished Goethe's mother, but I like her and I think she likes me. Merck is here ; he will ride a day's journey with us. There are beautiful pictures here for sale. I have perpetrated a little folly to the tune of only a hundred ducats."

From a subsequent letter from Merck to the duchess we learn that the duke and Goethe spent *four days* with Frau Rathin. That was a pretty long visit, and so Merck insinuates. "The old man (Goethe's father) is simply incorrigible," he writes to Anna Amalia ; "his manners are too bad. Imagine that when the duke lodged for four days in his house, he never gave his wife one penny more house money than usual. This man is Goethe's father and Frau Aja's husband ! The other day he was chuckling over the thought that

the gifted circle. Writing to Merck, Wieland tells him that, "The public sees in this simple and natural excursion a secret intrigue of some kind, and throws all manner of odium on our friend, who has given no ground for their dislike, for he has never injured any one. But since he has been openly declared Privy Councillor (which in truth he has been all along) the fury against him has risen to a height which borders on madness. *Sed vana sine viribus ira,*

it was not he who advanced the duke the money for the oil paintings he purchased here. I believe if he had done so, he would not have closed his eyes in sleep. I cannot understand why God allows such human beings to live. I trust your highness will excuse my gossip. I feel as if I were at Ettersburg, sitting under the large lantern, in the act of taking something to eat from the servant and from the *kammerherr* something to drink.

“ With the deepest respect,

“ Your Highness’s humble servant,

“ J. MERCK.”

I don’t know if my readers will agree with me, in thinking that Merck’s gossip was well-intentioned, so far as Fräü Aja’s interests were in question. The duchess at this time took no notice of the strong hint she had received, but that she told the duke is evident from the fact that he sent money later on to Merck for Frau Aja.

Meantime the travellers had crossed the frontier to Switzerland. There were only the duke, Goethe, and Wedel. They had the lightest of trunks, and

the strictest incognito was observed. Goethe separated for a day from his companions to pay a visit to Sesenheim. "There I found," he writes to Frau von Stein, "the family I left eight years ago, and was welcomed in the most friendly manner."

In his letters to Frau von Stein, a great portion of which were afterwards published as "Letters from Switzerland," the reader will find an account of his ride through Switzerland. The effect upon the duke's mental and bodily condition was wonderful, nature and the open-air life producing the most salutary effects. Goethe arranged a meeting with his old friend Lavater; he describes the almost angelic tranquillity of the old man's life. "There is a sense of repose and aloofness from all the pressure of life." He (Goethe) was so impressed by the successful result of this meeting, and the beneficial consequences that he felt confident would result from Lavater's conversations with the duke, that he resolved to erect a monument to Lavater in Weimar; and writing to him after his return, he says: "You know how useful from many points of view this journey has been to the duke, and how from this a fresh start will be

made, not alone in his, but in all our lives. I shall commemorate this happy event by erecting a memorial to the worker of the cure."

Anna Amalia, likewise, when she saw the change in her son, erected a temple in his honour.

There is no doubt the long conversations Karl August had with the philosopher on all subjects were of infinite benefit to his character, and greatly helped to form his judgment, which was apt to be led astray. From this time the faults of his education were not so apparent, and as time sobered the impetuosity of youth, his undoubtedly remarkable character developed. Unfortunately, the roughness was never quite eliminated. Goethe likewise benefited by contact with a mind superior in many ways to his own. It was noticed on his return that the "haughty exclusiveness and reserve, in which the new *Geheimerath* had wrapped himself," were considerably lessened, and although exalted, he knew he was still a man, not a god."

The travellers, who had been now absent four months, returned home by way of Karlsruhe and Darmstadt. According to Merck's account, Karl August and Goethe created a *furor* at Stuttgart,

where the duke insisted on going to court. Great difficulty was experienced in getting proper dresses to appear in. While here they visited the Military Academy. Amongst the students who came up to receive three prizes was a delicate, almost sickly youth of twenty, who kissed *the coat* of the reigning duke in an awkward manner, his nervousness being, as he afterwards narrated, due to the presence of Goethe; for this youth was Karl Schiller, who had failed to get a prize for German composition.

Karl August,<sup>1</sup> on his return to Frankfurt again took up his residence with Goethe's parents. We are told "he paid liberal attention to Frau Aja's good old wine and privately sent her a sum of money to compensate her for the expenses of the visit." Therefore Merck's intervention was manifestly effective. But one would have supposed the Geheimerath's mother would have been too proud to receive payment from her son's guest.

<sup>1</sup> Karl August's letter to Merck, sending a present of money to Frau Aja, is very characteristic: "I send herewith what I wish Frau Aja to have. She must accept it on the following terms;—first it is not a present; she did much for me in saving me from having to pay dear for bad accommodation at the "Red House" (the hotel in the Zeil); secondly, the old man is to know nothing of our little arrangement; thirdly, Goethe is on no account to hear of it.



Back in Weimar, things resumed their former course, only with a difference. Goethe has begun to think of *Wilhelm Meister* and the study of science. Theatricals still keep their hold; "they remain amongst the few things in which he still has the pleasure of a child and an artist." In great delight Wieland writes to Merck of the new order of things. Progress is the order of the day (August 1780); no less than three newspapers are in the field: Jägemann's *Italian Magazine*, Bertuch's *Spanish*<sup>1</sup> *Magazine*, and Wieland's *Merkur*, a very interesting production of a different order of merit from the two first named.

The *Merkur* was a review in small compass, but took a high place in literature by reason of its contributors, who included Wieland, Herder, Merck, Bode, Boteler, etc.—in fact, all the leading men of letters in Germany. Wieland, the editor, was indefatigable in his efforts to keep the standard up to the proper level. He wrote much for the

<sup>1</sup> Bertuch's Magazine was only a magazine of fashion-plates. Bertuch, who was *Legationsrath*, was a pupil of Wieland's and very active in literary matters, with which he combined different official posts, one being the directorship of the theatre. His prudent administration of the funds in these departments gained him the friendship of Anna Amalia and Karl August.

*Merkur*, mostly in prose, his "Danischwende" running through two or three volumes. His correspondence with Merck is full of this "beloved child," for whose benefit he is always urging Merck to send him copy. Wieland, whose affectionate nature never allowed him to bear malice long, makes a pleasant contrast to the sensitive, fault-finding Herder, and his sharp-tongued but excellent little wife.

The constant bickerings of the alumni and the amount of soothing the susceptibility of the contributors required was only what one would expect from a society of geniuses. Karl August, whose manners were somewhat rough-and-ready, often offended unintentionally. The Duchess Louise, good woman as she was and anxious to be all that was kind, lacked (as many of us do) the capability of showing what she felt. She was, as it were, frozen, and it took time and sorrow to melt the ice that had gathered round her heart. The gift of sympathy (a gift that changes the whole surface of life) is accorded to only a few. I mean by the word sympathy, not the well-worn expressions with which we are all familiar in the conventional letter of condolence. Sympathy requires no words, no high-

flown phrases out of the *Complete Letter-writer* ; it is a sort of magnetic current which, without the need of words, communicates itself to the sufferer. "I too have dwelt in Arcadia, I too have lost all that makes life worth having. . . weep out your sorrow in my arms."

Anna Amalia possessed this gift of sympathy in the highest degree ; the touch of her hand, the look in her eyes, the tender, motherly manner, were irresistible. Every man, woman, and child felt that here was a friend. It mattered not from what cause they suffered, whether by their own or some one else's fault, she was ready to console, and no poor soul ever went away without feeling its trouble lightened. The sorrows of genius (unacknowledged genius) she was always ready to soothe, if she could.

When misfortune came upon an over-burdened wife or husband, she gave material help of the most useful kind, and for mental trouble she was always ready with the truest, the most consoling sympathy. Many an afternoon when she might have wished to be otherwise occupied, did she listen to Wieland's lamentations over the difficulty he found in expressing himself in

verse, how it took him three hours to write one strophe, "turning and twisting the thing in my brain." His letters to Merck and others fill one with compassion, for we know how much depended on the success of his work. It is pleasant to know that it did succeed, beyond expectation. Goethe sent him a gold crown as a symbol of his congratulations (1780), and the duke, who knew what hard work it had been for the already heavily-weighted poet to accomplish his task, sent him words of kind congratulation. *Oberon* lives to this day—immortalised by Weber, it is true, but of itself a lovely poem and dear to every German heart.

In November 1781 Anna Amalia writes to Frau Aja, to tell her that Goethe had at last recognised the necessity of having a residence suitable to his position.

"WEIMAR, *November 23rd*, 1781.

"DEAREST FRAU AJA,

"I have the pleasure to announce to you that your beloved Häschelhans<sup>1</sup> has graciously made up his mind to hire a house in the town.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A name for Goethe, used by his parents.

<sup>2</sup> The house was situated in the Frauen-platz. Goethe

He will not come into possession till next Easter, because the lease of the present tenant does not expire till then. In the meantime, dear mother, *we have won half the battle*, and it is well that he has come so far. As he has behaved so well, I have promised to give him some of the furniture. Dear mother, will you be so kind as to choose some chintz for covering sofas and chairs, and send me the patterns and the prices asked?"

Then she goes on to tell her friend how delighted "old Wieland is with the present sent him by Frau Goethe and how he exclaimed: 'What a woman! She is the ornament of her sex!'—and to this I answer: Amen. . . .

"Our Wolf sends you a thousand greetings. He is well and in good spirits."

The year 1783 opened brightly; the birth of the long desired prince filled all hearts with joy, and gave to the duke the steadiness and serious purpose which had hitherto been wanting.

The baptismal ceremony took place on February 5th, and we can imagine the joy of the people of Weimar, who, like the good people they were,

bequeathed it to his son and grandson, and the latter left it a legacy to the town.

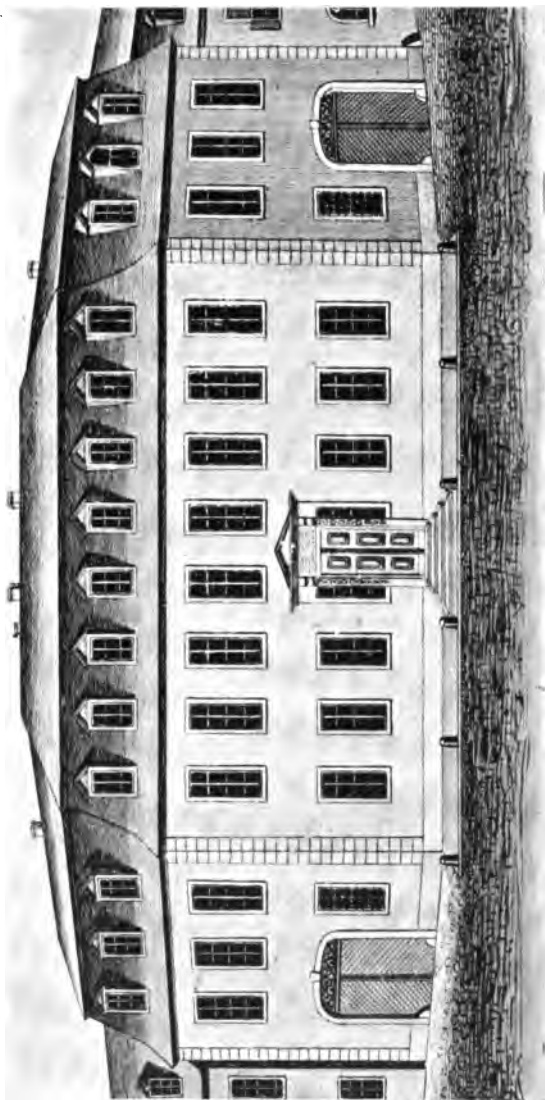


GOETHE'S HOUSE IN THE FRAUEN PLATZ AS IT WAS 1781.

Warum stehen sie davor?      Kämen sie getroft herein  
Ist nicht Thüre da und Thor?      Würden wohl empfangen seyn.

This inscription was placed over the door by Goethe 1828.





GOETHE'S HOUSE AS IT IS—1901. A NATIONAL MUSEUM BEQUEATHED TO THE TOWN BY GOETHE'S GRANDSON.  
[p. 418]





took a lively interest in everything that concerned the dear ducal family. "Herder preached," says Wieland, "like a god," and Wieland's Cantata was set to music by Kapellmeister Wolf, and was sung on the occasion. There were torchlight processions and barrels of beer, and every man drank as much as he could, and a good deal more than he ought. But then it was their duty to drink on this auspicious occasion. Every poet in Weimar, and there were a round dozen (taking the lesser lights with the stars) thought it his or her duty to write a birthday ode, there being one remarkable exception. His biographer draws the attention of his readers to the great generosity displayed by Goethe in not entering the list. "It could not be attributed to want of affection; but he who had been ever ready with ballet, opera, or poem, to honour the birthday of the two duchesses must have felt that now, when all the other Weimar writers were pouring in their offerings, he ought not to throw the weight of his position in the scale against theirs. Had the worst of the offerings been his, it would have been prized as the highest."

There is a touch of the condescension of the  
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giant to the pigmy in this his overstrained generosity, which could not have been pleasing to the author of *Oberon*, or even to such minor poets as Einsiedel and Knebel.

The young father in his elation at the happy event writes a delightful letter to Merck.

“Your congratulations are in the right key, for if there be any good dispositions in me they have hitherto wanted a fixed point; but now there is a firm hook upon which I can hang my pictures. With the help of Goethe and good luck I will, for the future, paint in such a manner that, if possible, the next generation shall say, ‘Ah! he too was a painter.’”

It is pleasant to record that these words were not merely due to the effervescence of youthful happiness which has attained its wish; it was a firm resolve, to which during his life the duke adhered.

We know from Goethe's correspondence with Charlotte von Stein that there were occasional rifts in the close friendship between Goethe and Karl August. The difference in their ages, although not sufficient to prevent intimacy, yet made Goethe impatient with faults and weaknesses, into which some few years previous he himself would have

been betrayed. Writing to his Charlotte, he complains that the duke, "Enthusiastic as he is for good, always begins by doing something foolish ; he is like the frog, he is made for the water, even when he has lived some time on land." Goethe refused to accompany the duke to Dresden, the latter's behaviour when on the Swiss tour having irritated his more refined instincts, and the letter of refusal he desires Frau von Stein to read. "If you think right, send it to the duke, or speak to him if you think it wiser, only do not spare him. I only wish to be quiet and to let him know with whom he has to deal. You may tell him also that I have declared to you that I will never travel with him again. Do this in your own prudent, gentle way."

The threat, however, was not fulfilled, and, whether owing to the lady's mediation or some other cause, a reconciliation took place. But soon there came another temporary disagreement. Again he writes to his confidante : "The duchess is a truly good and amiable woman. The duke is a good creature, and one could heartily love him, if he did not spoil everything by his schoolboy manners, and wear out one's patience through

placing his life in danger by his reckless exploits. I have grown quite callous to the possibility of my dearest friend breaking his neck, arms, or legs."

"These occasional outbreaks," his biographer says, "made no permanent effect on the long-standing friendship between the duke and Goethe, the latter's generosity and friendship asserting itself, in spite of passing fits of ill-humour." "The duke," he writes, "is guilty of many follies which I willingly excuse, considering my own."

Karl August was no ordinary character, and as time went on he displayed an amount of good sense and courage, which were of inestimable service in the evil times that overshadowed the coming years. He possessed a superabundant activity, was unceasing in his efforts to improve the condition of his subjects, and his tastes were simple, like those of Goethe. He had, in fact, in many points a strong resemblance to his friend. He lacked, however, "the quality which never allowed Goethe, except in his wildest moments, to overstep limits; he wanted the tenderness and chivalry which made the poet so universally acceptable to women."

His manners were rough, and he was more

at ease dining with his officers than in a ladies' drawing-room, even in that of Duchess Louise. The etiquette of court life always bored him, and it was, therefore, as far as possible, dispensed with at the court of Weimar. But all these were mere specks on the surface of a truly fine character. Karl August was in many ways a *great man*; that he was not altogether great, was in a measure due to his early training. His attachment to Goethe, who was about eight years his senior, was that of a younger brother to his elder. There were moments of dissatisfaction and occasional quarrels, but a friendship practically unbroken for fifty years is a record creditable to both, and is undoubtedly uncommon.

Goethe, in his later years, speaking to Eckermann on his friendship for the duke, said: "For more than half a century I have been connected in the closest relations with the grand duke, and for half a century have striven and toiled with him; but I should not be speaking truth, were I to say that I could name a single day on which the duke had not his thoughts busied with something to be devised and effected for the good of the country, something calculated to better the con-

dition of each individual in it. As to himself personally, what has his princely state given him but a burden and a task? Is his dwelling, is his dress, or his table, more sumptuously provided than that of any private man in easy circumstances?"

And Merck adds his quota of praise: "The duke," he says, "has a character firm as iron. I tell you sincerely (he is writing to Nicolai) that he is most worthy of respect, and one of the cleverest men that I have ever known."

In 1786 a general feeling of unrest seems to have seized upon the circle at Weimar: occupations, pleasures, friends, and surroundings—all and everything seemed out of joint.

Knebel had started for a long journey to the south; Merck was gone to Holland, to make an exhaustive search into questions of natural history. The letters of the travellers, their meeting old friends and interesting adventures, all raised in the mind of Anna Amalia a desire for change, a wish to see other countries, and Rome especially. Karl August, too, was constantly absent, partly from his natural inclination for travel, and partly in consequence of political complications, which necessitated visits to the Courts of Austria and

Berlin. In addition to these political affairs, the duke was anxious to procure for Prince Constantine a military position in Saxony, which he thought might steady the prince, whose conduct was not by any means satisfactory. He took counsel on this point with his uncle, the Duke of Brunswick, and for this purpose paid a visit to Brunswick, from which visit he returned much impressed by the great qualities of the duke, who had lately succeeded Duke Karl.

The following year his military duties took him to Berlin, where Frederick the Great was slowly wearing out. Karl August writes to his mother: "The light which was failing has sent forth a flash of its former brilliancy, but a sudden blaze often heralds total darkness." This opinion proved correct, but before the total eclipse came to pass Frederick the Great had an opportunity to do his favourite niece a favour. Prince Constantine, who had ever been a thorn in the side of the ducal family, had infringed all military rules by leaving his post of duty during the manœuvres at Schlesien.

Karl August presented a letter from his mother to the king, in which Anna Amalia in the most



touching manner entreated his forgiveness for this breach of discipline on the part of her son Constantine. On this, the last occasion he was to have of doing his niece a kindness, Frederick did not fail, and Constantine was pardoned.

A few weeks later Frederick, writing to Anna Amalia, remarks that he was sorry Prince Constantine had not presented himself at his (the king's) levée "and given me the opportunity of speaking to him, which I would have gladly done for your sake." He concludes: "If I were not so old, I would go to Weimar that I might have the happiness of embracing you, my dear niece, again. As it is, you may always believe that, absent or present, I am ever tenderly attached to you, my very dear niece.

"Your faithful uncle and friend,

"FRIEDRICH."

The last letter Anna Amalia received from her celebrated relative is not in his handwriting, only his name is signed by him, with a trembling hand. It is dated January 20th, 1786.

"MY DEAR LADY AND NIECE,

"If I could follow the wish of my heart,

I would accept your invitation and come to Weimar to spend some days with you. But your highness knows full well that higher duties than my own pleasure keep me here, and the cares that press upon me will not allow me to be absent from Berlin. There is, therefore, nothing left for us, but to renew from time to time the intercourse which has been to me throughout the later years of my life a source of true enjoyment.

“I am, my dear niece,

“Your Royal Highness’s good uncle,

“FRIEDRICH.”

The sense of duty which chained the weary king to the service of his country cost him his life. He died in August 1786. Anna Amalia who was ill at the time of the king’s death, was much overcome by the news, and it was probably owing to the shock to her nerves that the incident occurred to which Karl August alludes in the following letter, dated three days after Frederick the Great’s death.

“The strange apparition which you mention, my dearest mother, as having appeared to you, has greatly excited my curiosity. Could you not arrange for the ghostly visitant to remain until

my return? Joking apart, I imagine that it so happened that you and Thusnelda heard a groan, which came God knows how. This caused your nerves to be on the stretch, and in your case especially, in consequence of your recent illness and the atmospheric pressure, your nervous system was in the highest degree impressionable to any species of delusion or phantom of the imagination. In my opinion the whole thing was a delusion, and I am strengthened in this opinion by the fact that Thusnelda, who is in good health and not suffering from nerve prostration as you are, saw nothing. So far as the groan went, perhaps we shall come to the bottom of this mystery. All the same, I should like to penetrate the veil that hangs over the land of spirits.<sup>1</sup> It is very fortunate that your health has not suffered from the fright. I hope however, this will teach you that the evening air is not fit for you, and that in future you will take more care of yourself."

A longing for change succeeded to the depression felt by the dowager-duchess. It was some time, however, before her wish could be realised.

<sup>1</sup> Nothing more is said about this sepulchral groan and the apparition that followed it.

A hundred and twenty years ago, people did not decide over night that they would go to Paris or Rome next morning; it was a matter of very serious consideration and meant a large outlay of money for travelling carriages, post-horses, couriers, and the like. Geheimerath von Goethe was, however, a rich man, and these little matters were not of importance. His health was giving uneasiness, and when he accompanied the duke to Karlsbad in the autumn of 1786, he found no difficulty in getting his permission to travel for a year: indeed, his words were "for an indefinite period." He added that he felt it necessary for his intellectual health, that he should lose himself in a world where he was unknown. But what about his dear Charlotte, who was left behind in such cavalier fashion? Well, she had her letters—not every day, but as often as an imperfect postal system would allow. The letters (with necessary omissions) were later given to the public under the title of "Travels in Italy."

It was indeed high time for Goethe to breathe the fresh air of larger cities than little Weimar, where his gigantic personality was growing oppressive, even to himself. His ten years' residence

in the Modern Athens had been a blank as far as literary progress was concerned ; his great gifts had been more or less frittered away in the getting up of plays and entertainments. It was true that, during the last year, he had withdrawn himself more from the frivolities of society, and in the solitude of his garden house had written a good portion of *Wilhelm Meister*. This was the first note heralding a healthy revival, to which his visit to Italy gave the final touches. The tranquillity of his life, the absence of the daily official pressure and the social treadmill, acted beneficially on his nerves, which had been continually at high tension, while to a mind so receptive of the beauties of nature and the treasures of art, it was, as it were, a new birth to be able to live thus in the ancient capital of Italy, to visit its antiquities under the guidance of Reiffenstein, and study with Wincklemann its ancient philosophy.

“It is a jubilee of joy,” he writes to his mother, on November 17th, 1786 ; “a miracle, that the desire of your soul and the longing of my youth have at last been accomplished.”

The first letter of Goethe to Anna Amalia is dated December 23rd, 1786.



GOETHE, 1786.

*After the Portrait painted by Angelica Kaufmann during Goethe's stay in Rome.*



"I have been wishing for some time to give your highness some news of myself and of my residence in Rome, but I can hardly hope to write anything worthy of interesting you, for the traveller can rarely convey to others (in writing especially) his sensations, on finding himself in the very spot where his heart and his imagination have wandered for years. I have now finished my first hasty survey of Rome. I am acquainted with the town, its situation, its ruins, villas, palaces, galleries, and museums. With such abundance of material the mind, the imagination, the heart, are all fully occupied, but when one has to consider these things from the standard of their actual worth as matters of art, not to consider them from the effect they have made upon us, but from their individual merit, then the task becomes more difficult, and we feel that it would take time to fully grasp all we have to learn.

"Being determined to neglect nothing that can add to my first enjoyment, I have visited the ruins with an antiquarian,<sup>1</sup> the other works of art with different artists, and I have come to the conclusion that it would take a lifetime of mental

<sup>1</sup> Reiffenstein.



activity to grasp in full extent all that is to be learned here ; and here I have come to the conclusion that it is easier and more satisfactory to study the secrets of nature than the mysteries of art. The smallest product of nature has in itself the necessary power of production, and we have only to use our eyes to be assured of this. A work of art, on the other hand, owes its perfection to the outside ; it is created by the artist, who seldom, if ever, realises his ideal, so bound is he by certain laws, which are indispensable to the nature of art and are not so plain or so easy to follow as the laws of nature. The works of art are, in fact, limited by tradition ; the works of nature are God's outspoken word.

“I shall never forget the words you spoke to me at our last meeting, nor the pain it gave me not to acquaint you with my determination. I trust on my return I shall find in your highness an equally gracious and amicable princess.

“Your humble servant,

“GOETHE.”

Anna Amalia was much pleased with this letter, and in her friendly way sent it to some of the

Weimar circle. Herder had the first view of it, and in his usual fashion thinks only of himself. "Why should the pope and his monks possess this land of milk and honey, where the laurel hedges and the lemon-trees are in blossom, while we live here *behind the church* in a dense fog?"

Knebel, who is in Switzerland, hears of the letter (probably through Thusnelda), and writes to ask that he may have a look at it, promising to send it back safely. Merck also applies. So Anna Amalia promises to say a word to Frau Rath, who has the extracts from Goethe's letters to Karl August, which the duke had sent her, and Frau Rath writes to her dear duchess :

"Every wish of your highness is for me an eleventh commandment. Friend Merck shall have the two letters (more than these I have not had), but I much doubt whether he will find anything in them to make fun of after his fashion. To me they have been a great comfort. I am rejoiced, because at last this greatest desire of his life has been accomplished. From his early youth the thought of Rome filled his mind, and my joy is great ; for I know what he feels, now that he is in presence of the masterpieces of

antiquity, will be an enjoyment for all the rest of his life ; likewise for his friends who will share his enjoyment, for he possesses the gift of reproducing what he has seen in a vivid and convincing manner. May God bring him back to us sound and safe, then my wishes shall be fulfilled."

## CHAPTER IV

THE many cares which had pressed upon Anna Amalia during the last few years, the death of her father, Duke Karl, the illness of her brother, the distress of mind she suffered in regard to Prince Constantine—all of these things, although borne with fortitude and apparent calm, had preyed deeply upon the affectionate nature of the duchess, and now resulted in a severe illness, which caused grave fears of her life. The anxiety and distress this gave rise to, not alone in Weimar itself, but in every part of the duchy and amongst foreign nations, was a gratifying tribute to the merits of our duchess. There was universal joy when Doctor Hufeland, the court physician, issued more favourable bulletins, and a slow convalescence was followed by recovery.

Nevertheless, Anna Amalia's constitution was enfeebled, and a total change to the warmth of the sunny south was deemed absolutely

necessary to restore her mental and bodily activity. The first date fixed was the autumn of 1787, but Goethe discountenanced this plan, on the ground that the invalid would not reap so much benefit from the change of temperature as if she came in the spring, which in Italy is so enchanting and so reviving to one exhausted by illness. So it was arranged, and Anna Amalia gave herself up to the delights of anticipation. The very thought seems to have restored her strength, and scattered the cobwebs of melancholy, which had for a time dimmed her natural gaiety.

"I must tell you a wonderful piece of news," she writes to Merck in the beginning of the year 1788. "I have settled that this year I shall make a journey to Italy. Is not this a bold flight? The very thought that my desire is to be accomplished, and that I am to see with my own eyes that beautiful land, fills me with happiness. I believe Italy is to us what the river Lethe was to the Ancients. There one's youth is renewed and everything—the disagreeables one has to encounter and the rest—are all forgotten and one becomes an altogether new person. I hope, dear Merck, you will give your blessing to my journey."

In the spring of 1788 the preparations were begun. The undertaking was surrounded with many difficulties. To the people of Weimar the idea of their dear duchess making such a journey seemed actually flying in the face of Providence, and in their distress they had recourse to Minister von Fritsch, begging of him to lay before her their petition—their earnest petition—that she would abandon a project so fraught with danger. The minister promised to lay their wishes before the duchess, and he did so in one of his long-winded epistles, which we will take the liberty to condense.

“The honest burghers of Weimar are trembling at the dangers to which your highness will be exposed in the long journey you contemplate. Their distress at your late dangerous illness was great, but greater far is their present anxiety at the idea of a journey to a country where the climate is anything but healthy, and might prove injurious to your precious health. These good people say nothing of another powerful reason against your absence—that it will be injurious to the trade and manufactures of the town, which benefit largely by your highness’s presence. I will do them the

justice to say I believe this has nothing to do with their anxiety." (Then why mention it, good Master Fritsch, unless you wish to benefit the town?) He ends with the hope that the duchess will weigh the matter well before she makes a decision.

The duchess complied with this last request; she sent no answer for five days, during which time we must suppose she was considering what her faithful burghers had, through her excellent friend Minister von Fritsch, put before her. Then, as the result of her cogitations she sent through Minister von Fritsch a very pretty letter to her kind friends, thanking them for their anxiety but adhering to her intention of going to Italy, which she assured them was absolutely necessary for her health, which she trusted, with the blessing of God, would be fully restored, and that, if the Almighty permitted, she would return to her good friends and live amongst them for the rest of the time allotted to her. So it was settled; nor was it indeed probable that the duchess would have given way to such old-fashioned ideas; that obstinate little chin of hers was indicative of a steady purpose. Minister von Fritsch ought to



WOLFGANG HERIBERT REICHSFREIHERR V. DALBERG.  
Geb. zu Hemsheim bei Worms 1749.—Gest. zu Mannheim 1806.





have known this, and we may be pretty sure got a rating for placing his dear duchess in so unpleasant a position. If Anna Amalia's temper was quick, her anger never lasted long, and, doubtless, Fritsch was soon forgiven.

Meanwhile another party had set out for Rome, in which was included Herder, whose grumble as to the fogs behind the church had, we must suppose, reached the ears of Statthalter von Dalberg, who was on the point of starting for Rome, and who now invited Herder to accompany him as a guest, all his expenses to be defrayed. In this act of kindness Dalberg was influenced as much by his wish to be of use to his friend (he had known Herder many years) as by his desire to secure a third person to break the awkwardness of a *tête-à-tête* journey with a lady, who, although she was related to him by some cousinly ramification, would be, he thought, rather a trying companion. The lady in question was the wife of Sigismund von Seckendorf, whose name has been previously mentioned in connection with the stage of Weimar, as a fair actor and an excellent playwright.

Before coming to Weimar he had lived some years at the court of the Markgraf of Bayreuth

and Anspach (the successor to Wilhelmina's Markgraf), where he had filled the post of minister. Unfortunately, he was not to the taste of the Margravine (Lady Craven), and in consequence had to leave Bayreuth. He was a handsome man, his manners and everything about him bespoke the gentleman. His wife, on the contrary, although a cousin of Dalberg's, was not of the *grand monde*, and as it appeared had nothing of a lady about her. She did not join the party till they reached Innsbrück, and up to this Herder had enjoyed himself much.

But now everything was to change. Herder's adventures, although most unpleasant for himself, are very entertaining. The lady, who from the first took a dislike to him, made herself most disagreeable. He fancied she despised him because he was poor. It was not fancy, however, but unpleasant reality, when she insisted on taking one side of the large berline to herself and making the others uncomfortable. After a little Dalberg fell quite under her spell and did everything she liked. At Bolzano Herder met Kayser, one of Anna Amalia's travelling party. He told Herder that they had started on August 15th, but that he found

it impossible to travel with the suite, and so Anna Amalia gave him the money to find his way back to Switzerland. Herder's spirits revived at the prospect of seeing the duchess in Rome, as his situation was growing every day more uncomfortable.

Dalberg and his fair friend having now become close allies, Herder realised the truth of the proverb about two being company. The lady, having taken a dislike to him, influenced Dalberg against him, and he found the only way to get on was to pay his share of the expenses. When he arrived in Rome he got away from his uncongenial companions and hired a lodging for himself, where at all events he was at peace, and free from the lady's insults. But there was the lodging to pay for and the living, and there was the family at home. "All the money I have goes in food," he says piteously. "If one only had money one could live pleasantly—not that things are dear here, but I have so little." His wife, pretty Caroline Flachsland, does her best to console him. "In the end," she writes, "the few thalers you spend won't make much difference in our year's income."

But then the income was such a pittance. Caroline had hard work to keep house on it ; but

she writes most cheerfully of all that is going on in Weimar, where every one is most kind to her, especially Goethe who is back in Weimar and settled in the new house in the Frauenplatz. She gives an account of an evening at Goethe's, whose conduct she describes as odd.

"There were few people, the Stein, Schardt, Imhoff, and myself. We all hoped that, with so few, he would be himself, but soon the door opened and in came Frau von Wortel and her children, and also Voigt. We were ill at ease, and a little after seven came away. Frau von Schardt told me that, yesterday at the dancing picnic, he wouldn't speak a word to any woman of position, but danced and made love to all the girls, kissing their hands and going on with every kind of nonsense. In short, he does not want to have anything to say to his old friends." She adds: "His going on with the girls in this manner did not please the duke, who was present." Again: "The duke was at Goethe's on Saturday; he enquired for you and told me to ask you, had you no leisure to send a line to your friends, or was your time better occupied in writing tender letters to your wife. I excused you as well as I could, and I think he was

satisfied, he was so friendly. Since then I have not seen him."

Caroline was evidently much taken up with Goethe, she is for ever bringing in his name, and he grew very attentive, often coming to see her and talk over Herder's affairs and his bad treatment by Dalberg.

It is amusing to read through the lines the growing jealousy of Herder, who dislikes to be "talked over" by his wife and her friend. Especially wroth is he with Caroline for showing his letters to his intimate friend. "Have I not repeatedly told you not to do so?" he writes. "Now I command you." Caroline, however, who had not very much penetration, evidently did not guess the cause of this outburst, and continued to quote Goethe's opinion on every subject. Of serio-comic interest is the correspondence between husband and wife, as to his paying attention to his dress, the buying of a new silk gown for evening wear, and the price he has to pay; she makes imploring requests that he will not wear soiled neckties and that above all he must be sure to get the new silk gown. The affair of the gown occupies much space in the correspondence between

husband and wife and has quite a Vicar of Wakefield flavour, in all of which Caroline Herder's goodness of heart comes out well. But once Anna Amalia (who was ever good to the Herder family) arrived in Rome, Caroline's troubles were at an end. A place was reserved for Herder at the duchess's table, and kindly Thusnelda looked after him in any difficulty.

On August 10th, 1788, Amalia started on her journey, which was to last till the summer of 1790. In the previous winter Goethe had brought from Rome a young Italian named Collina, who was now about to return to his own country and it was proposed that he should act as guide on the journey to Italy. For some reason, probably out of a kind desire on the duchess's part to benefit him, Kayser the artist, was substituted for Goethe's Italian ; this proved a mistake.

The duchess's travelling companions, in addition to Kayser, were Einsiedel as gentleman-in-waiting, and Thusnelda as lady-in-waiting. Amalia made the same resolution as Goethe, to hold aloof from society, but she was of too social a nature to keep to this determination, and for this reason her tour was eminently successful. We hear of

the travellers from another party, who had started shortly after the duchess.

Anna Amalia and her companions arrived at Verona on September 3rd, the journey thither occupying nineteen days. But what a journey ! very different from rushing through at breakneck, *grande vitesse* speed, seeing hardly anything of the lovely panorama of mountains, valleys, and lakes. Listen to Thusnelda's graphic description (in a letter to Wieland) :

“Imagine yourself in a narrow mountain pass, the end of which seems to dissolve into clouds, the mountain's top covered with snow and ice, out of which there seems no possible outlet. All round, the eye sees nothing but high mountain peaks reaching heavenward, tumbling waterfalls which draw the mountains closer to us : every quarter of an hour we pass pictures of the crucifixion, representations of accidents, carriages upset, or legends of the saints whose miraculous intercession has saved men from certain death. The art of these representations is of the rudest kind, and makes a curious contrast to Nature's handiwork which is here seen in perfection. By degrees the mountain scenery with its splendour and



immensity gives place to the loveliest of smiling landscape. Here is nothing but hill and dale; vineyards stretch as far as the eye can reach; it is the land of fruitfulness and plenty. At nine o'clock yesterday evening we arrived here, where the duchess intends remaining some time."

The duchess adds these few lines :

"My dear old man, I write these few lines to show you you are in my thoughts. For myself I feel like the holy souls in Elysium. I trust all goes well with you. AMALIA."

To Goethe Anna Amalia writes at more length.

"VERONA.

"At last I am within the gates of Italy, so long my promised land. Last night I arrived at Verona in excellent health and spirits." She then gives an account of Kayser's conduct. "At Regensburg he got into bad humour, but when I spoke to him he complained of being ill, and we begged him to keep himself quiet and look after his health. At Innsbrück he got another fit of ill-temper and wanted to leave, but Einsiedel reasoned with him and he stayed till we arrived at Bolzano, where he insisted on leaving, although Einsiedel pointed

out to him that so far he had not had occasion to be of any use to me, and that he ought to do some service before he left. I spoke to him and asked him to come as far as Milan, but he would not, so I gave him money for his return journey and he is gone. We are now in the hands of Collina, who so far has been satisfactory. We have had an excellent journey; the weather is splendid, we are in excellent health and spirits."

These letters, which in the usual manner were handed from one to another of the select circle of Weimar, gave universal satisfaction, Karl August taking care it should be made known to the people generally that their dear duchess had made a prosperous journey. Meantime the blank caused by the absence of the travellers was in a measure filled by the return of Goethe, who appears to have somewhat cut short his tour. His absence from Rome was a great loss to the duchess, but he did his best to make up by constant letters of advice and by introductions to all his friends.

It was Herder who received Anna Amalia on her arrival in Rome, October 4th. Thusnelda tells us that after he had poured out all his grievances and had recovered from a fit of ill-temper and

overwrought nerves, he became very agreeable and lived with the duchess as one of the family.

His letters to Weimar are filled with amazement at the duchess's never-flagging activity and excellent spirits. In Rome she lived as a private individual, under the name of the Countess Alstedt, but was treated with all the respect due to her high position.

"Every one here," writes Herder, "says that no royal visitor has ever received more, if so much, honour as is shown to our duchess." The Italians were delighted with the good humour, the gaiety, the wonderful intelligence and the charm of manner possessed by the duchess, whose capacity for making friends was never so clearly shown as in this Italian tour. Everywhere she went it was the same story, and it cannot be said that this popularity was due either to her position or her wealth, minor German royalties being held in small estimation, while English millionaires and Russian princes scattered gold as if it were copper. Anna Amalia's popularity was all the more gratifying that it was due to her personality. The duchess was thoroughly happy; the largeness of the life as compared with the littleness which was a necessary

condition of a small circle like that of Weimar, was delightful to one who had an open mind on every subject; and her circle of friends growing daily larger, she became a centre, round which gathered every sort and condition of political, artistic, intellectual, religious and non-religious men and women.

Thusnelda sends Wieland a sort of diary of what they are doing and the friends they have made.

"The mornings with few exceptions are devoted to sight-seeing and art, and every day we see something new. I prefer the Museums, the Pantheon, and St. Peter's, which one could visit over and over again. On these pilgrimages we are accompanied by Herder and Reiffenstein.<sup>1</sup> We go out at ten o'clock and return before two. Both

<sup>1</sup> "She makes great fun of old Reiffenstein (Thusnelda had a mocking spirit, which made her enemies), an antiquarian friend of Goethe's, who devoted his time to showing the antiquities of Rome to the duchess. "He generally comes in the morning," writes Thusnelda, "and if the *minestra* smells particularly good, remains to dinner. Then we go round through all the corners of Rome. In the evening we sit round a large table and work or draw. We have a new visitor, Abbé Ceruti, who has translated Homer. Herder brought him to the duchess. It appears that such a figure is absolutely indispensable at every house that respects itself."

gentlemen dine with us, also occasionally some one of our new acquaintances, and there is then conversation which would, I know, please you; and how it would gratify me if you were here! After dinner we either take a siesta or, if very fine, a walk to some remarkable place. Rome is full of charming walks. We all meet at the tea-table and are sure to have several of our acquaintance. The theatres are not open yet, but there are concerts. This is our usual life, though some days in the week the duchess is obliged to receive the *grand monde*; but this is the only break.

“The duchess never dines out of her own house (on account of her health, all ministerial dinners and evening parties are forbidden); the only exception she makes is for the Cardinal Boncompagni (State secretary), Cardinal Bernis, and the Spanish Ambassador, Azara, the same who published Mengs’ works. These dinners are very interesting, for the reason that these three men belong to the best and most interesting circle in Rome. Cardinal Bernis comes almost every second evening to the duchess, and despite his seventy years of age, is the very best company that you can imagine. He is so clever and has seen so

much of the world, and of the best of everything, both in his own country and elsewhere. He knew Voltaire and Fontenelle, and other great lights, and relates pleasant anecdotes of that period.

“The duchess is at home only to a select few in the evening (if she allowed free entrée, half the society in Rome would put in an appearance). The cardinal sometimes is accompanied by most interesting and agreeable people, and from seven o’clock, I assure you, the company is often of the very best. At some of the large conversazioni where all Rome comes pouring in, there are often three hundred people present. To these the duchess goes seldom—perhaps once a week, never oftener. As the people here have shown, especially for Romans, the most extraordinary civility to the duchess, the consequence is *par contre-coup* that I have much to do ; nevertheless, I have never been so well and have enjoyed myself exceedingly. The Holy Father (as you are aware) is a handsome man, and it gives me pleasure to look on his face. Our dear princess sends you a great many greetings and thanks for your last letters, and will soon write to you.”

“Herder,” she says, in another letter, “is in  
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excellent form, enjoying life. He is very good and constant to us, and comes mostly every day to dine. He goes out a good deal, and has a fine silk gown for festivities. He and the old sea-lion (Reiffenstein) get on admirably. Our artists are Bury, Schütz, and Verschappel; these are standing dishes, but others come occasionally. Bury is a nice fellow and my favourite; he reminds me of Fritzchen (the young von Stein)."

Thusnelda's graphic pen paints in a few words the novel effect to her of the Italian climate. "In Italy we learn what the originals of the sun and moon are like. In Germany we have only copies." (This applies with even more accuracy to our own country.) By degrees Anna Amalia finds it impossible to keep to her rule of not going to receptions; she has to accept some invitations to the royal palace. "The duchess enjoys it," writes Thusnelda, "and every one says there never was a German princess in Rome so popular as our duchess. She is treated by every one with more than courtesy; it is devotion. The Vatican even extends a friendly welcome; she received three places for the ceremonials on St. Peter's day and for all the processions, etc."

The Abbé Ceruti, introduces Anna Amalia to the Arcadian Academy, where there is a great deal of speech-making and talk of science. But the highest dignitaries, too, interest themselves about Amalia. She is sent the best seats for ceremonies in the Sistine Chapel in the Vatican, as well as the places for the ceremonies in St. Peter's ; and still more, the Holy Father is ready to grant an audience to the gifted duchess.

"To-morrow," writes Thusnelda, "is the great day, when the duchess is to be presented to the pope. She has received such favours from the Vatican that this is necessary, and it will be looked upon as a compliment on her side as much as on his. She will be received by the pope *alone* ; her lady-in-waiting even will not attend her, and the interview will take place with closed doors, the attendants remaining in the ante-chamber. When the duchess's interview is over, I am to be presented by the Princess Santa Croce, a favour which has never before been shown to persons of my position."

Of the proceedings on the day she tells us : "At five o'clock we drove to call for Princess Santa Croce, and then proceeded to the Vatican. We



were first brought to Cardinal Braschi's apartments, where several cardinals and monsignors were assembled to do honour to the duchess. Towards six o'clock we went to the pope. The Swiss Guard presented arms and several ceremonies were gone through. We mounted a steep staircase and passed through a number of rooms. The duchess went by herself to the pope, and her audience lasted half an hour. After the duchess, Einsiedel and I were presented. Then we returned through many rooms and across the garden by torchlight."

Amalia also writes her account of the reception. "On the evening of November 23rd, I was presented to the pope. It was a theatrical and comical scene ; it was for all the world as if I were being led away to some secret tribunal. When we returned home we made great fun of the many comical situations."

Amalia was a stiff-necked Lutheran, and her pride was in arms at having to bend to the head of the more ancient Church ; but setting aside these Lutheran prejudices, she was liberal-minded. Her judgments of character or personality were never influenced by religious bias, as for example when later on she got to know intimately Archbishop

Capecelatro, one of the ideal and saintly priests of the Catholic Church, she writes : "How happy should I be, had I always near me men like this bishop, free from self-seeking, full of intelligence, and gently drawing the heart towards God." Later on, and in order to see Capecelatro again, she travelled to Apulia to take leave of him.

Thusnelda says : "The parting for ever from such a man as the archbishop of Tarent is a kind of anticipated death."

## CHAPTER V

**A**NOTHER close bond of friendship, which was knit during this time, was with the artist Angelica Kaufmann Zucchi. Angelica has long since descended from the position she once held. But in 1788, and for fifty years later, great prices were given for her work.

Drawn together by their common admiration for Goethe and their love of art, the two women became dear friends. In one of his first letters to the duchess, Goethe strikes the keynote of this friendship: "You have seen Madame Angelica by this time, and this excellent woman must from many different points be interesting to you;" and the duchess immediately responds:

"I go to Angelica as often as I can, and she comes to me; she is in every way *eine herzliche frau*.<sup>1</sup> Next Friday I am to sit to her for my portrait, certainly not as a model, but I wish to have

<sup>1</sup> A lovable woman.

something of hers. Old Zucchi has given me some of his drawings."

The first letter Angelica writes to Goethe after the duchess's arrival is in a joyous tone. It begins : "Do you know, my dear friend, that I am coming to Weimar? Have you ever dreamt of such a thing? Her excellency, the duchess, has invited, in the most cordial manner, good Rath Reiffenstein, Zucchi, and me, either to accompany her back or to follow her. Fräulein von Göchhausen and Herder were present and added their entreaties. Was it possible to refuse such a gracious proposal? The promise has been given *if circumstances permit*. Blessed Weimar, which, since it has given me the joy of knowing you, I have so often envied, and to which my thoughts fly so constantly, shall I really see it, and see *you there*? Oh, most beautiful dream, and still I hope that, even before this journey comes off, we may see you in Rome. That the duchess has shown herself so gracious to me, I have to thank you for, my best and dear friend.

"This gracious princess honours me with a visit constantly, and she allows me to go to her. We often speak of you, and then what joy fills my soul. A few evenings ago her highness visited

the museum, attended by her whole suite, that is, Herr Baron von Dalberg, Frau von Seckendorf, Herr Herder, etc. ; Zucchi and I had also the honour of attending her. It was quite a festival for me. Nevertheless, there was something wanting to make me perfectly content. Your name was repeated in the hall of the Muses, but I looked about me and only saw you in spirit. When we all stood before the Apollo, some one proposed that we should offer a prayer to the god. Herr Herder said we should each ask for something. My prayer to Apollo was that he would inspire you to come to Rome. Oh, that my wish may be granted ; but it must be *before* I go to Weimar.

“The duchess’s circle is exceedingly pleasant, and what a kindly dear creature is Fräulein von Göchhausen. So intelligent and so lively, and she does everything so well. The Duchess seems quite satisfied. The weather is beautiful ; everything looks to the best advantage. Madame von Seckendorf desires to be remembered to you. I am glad that you like the title page. Herr Rath is sending the design, perhaps to-morrow, with other things to you. I hear much in praise of your ‘Tasso.’ I am rejoicing over the hope you

have given me, that you may still read it to me. It is a consolation for much. May Apollo strengthen you in this good purpose. I thank you meanwhile for having thought of me.

\* \* \* \* \*

"Zucchi and I often talk of you, but alas! that is not the same as being with you. Ah, the happy time; the dear Sundays, which I will think of as long as I live. Her highness, the duchess, seems to wish that I should paint her portrait. Next week I shall have the honour to commence it. I hope my work will please. I have just finished the two Shakespearian pictures.<sup>1</sup> A mass of things are waiting for me to begin. One after the other they will gradually get finished. It is all well so long as health lasts; but on that score I cannot complain at present. I am anxious about you, and trust you take care of yourself.

"The other day I chanced on a good specimen of an Intaglio, cut in "Hiuzint,"<sup>2</sup> which I rather fancy. I send you an impression, which I hope may reach you safely. The stone is very fine, and cut in a masterly manner in my judgment,

<sup>1</sup> For Boydell's "Shakespeare."

<sup>2</sup> No translation can be found of Hiuzint *metal*.

only I have a doubt on account of the subject, because under the four antiques there seems to be the head of a philosopher. A word from you will settle this matter and be a guide for me in the future.

“I am glad that you like your present situation, and that you have time to prosecute your work. May you live always happy and content, and if you have an idle moment, think of me. Farewell, best of friends.

“A. K.”<sup>1</sup>

In several of the duchess's letters to Goethe there is most kind mention of Angelica. “I have sat twice,” she says, “to Angelica, and the picture promises to be a splendid success. The last time I sat, Herder read for us your poems. The good Angelica was so inspired, that the portrait seemed to grow under her fingers.” And again Herder writes: “Angelica is a lovely Madonna; only she lives in herself and feeds upon her own branches.” Fräulein von Göchhausen also gives her meed of praise: “Angelica has such a beautiful soul; there

<sup>1</sup> From the “Correspondence of Angelica Kaufmann Zucchi with Goethe,” published by the Goethe Society, volume v., 1870.

are few like her, and out of love for her one grows better when near her. She loves the duchess, and yesterday she wept tears of sorrow at the thought that our quiet evenings were over. We cheer her up with talking of her visit to Weimar, and so try to dispel the melancholy, which hangs about a farewell."

Einsiedel writes to Goethe, November 15th, 1788: "I have delayed writing until I could tell you something definite as to our plans. Nearly four weeks have been occupied in visiting Roma Antica, and since the beginning of this month we occupy ourselves with Roma Moderna. But the great world has latterly taken complete possession of us. The duchess receives much more attention than we ever expected and far more than is usually paid to royalties; but if the duchess consulted her own interest she would not stay here much longer, for it requires close attention, and is very fatiguing to receive all these advances in the proper manner."

(The duty of replying to invitations, leaving cards, etc., devolved on Einsiedel as chamberlain; hence the complaint.)

"There appears to be no other way of cutting short this whirligig, and resuming our free and



tranquil mode of life. Although the duchess excuses herself from all large dinners and entertainments on the plea of her health, she says she cannot refuse such things as conversaziones, little dinners, and the like, and in this way our circle of acquaintances is growing larger every day. . . . She is flattered at the wish of every one here to make her stay pleasant, only I doubt her being able to continue the exertion it involves, and the constant attention which is necessary in order to give each person the attention he considers due to his position. The advice of Cardinal Bernis is invaluable, and Santa Croce helps us with his experience of society in Rome.

“The duchess’s plan is now to go to Naples in January—that is earlier than she intended—and to live there quietly which she has quite given up doing here. Reiffenstein will accompany us to Naples, which is a great relief to my mind, otherwise I should have had to search for another antiquarian mentor. Farewell.

“Yours,

“EINSIEDEL.”

Very amusing is the ill-humour which breathes

through every line of this letter. Einsiedel was evidently not lying on a bed of roses. The duchess was probably a little thoughtless, as people are apt to be when in a whirl. There was no doubt she enjoyed the excitement of the perpetual *va-et-vient*, and the homage she received was pleasing to her.

In all the whirl of sight-seeing and amidst the rush of visitors and entertainments, the duchess never forgot those she had left at home, and to her household and old retainers she wrote at regular intervals. Here is a letter, full of kindly words to old Kogeln, who had been many years in her service.

“DEAR OLD KOGELN,

“Your note and good wishes for my birthday gave me much pleasure. Take great care of yourself and keep well, so that on my return I may find you in good health. Give my greetings to Piper<sup>1</sup> and tell her to give the maids a good kiss from me. I am very well and take great care of myself. Adieu, dear Kogeln: Fräulein Göchhausen sends you her remembrances,

“AMALIE.”

<sup>1</sup> Piper, the duchess's maid, who came with her from Brunswick in 1756. Piper outlived the duchess many years.

The duchess writes to Knebel in the same affectionate tone, but more intimately :

“One would think, dear Knebel, that it would be the easiest thing possible to write letters from Rome, and yet nothing is more certain that it is very hard to accomplish. Imagine for yourself what it would be to sit at a splendidly covered board, and have a stomach that will digest all that is provided. Well, this is my condition. The enjoyment here is great, for one is surrounded with the most perfectly beautiful things the world can produce. Dear Knebel, would I could transport you here, and lead you into the temple of the Muses, where Apollo is surrounded by the Nine : he plays upon the lyre ; his whole being is harmony. We hear his melodious song, it fills the mind, and one’s soul is full of harmony. Herder has written some lovely lines, which show that the right spirit has entered his soul. These stanzas of his have the ring of true art. Read them attentively and you will have an idea of this lovely work of art.”<sup>1</sup> Then she goes on to tell Knebel “that the sweet little verses he had sent Goethe were read to Madame Angelica while she was

<sup>1</sup> “ The Statue of Apollo.”

painting my portrait, or rather I should say the tableau she makes of me, which is full of poetry."

Knebel answers in a tone of affected gaiety, assumed in order to conceal the depression he feels at the general outlook, which, politically, was undoubtedly bad; moreover, learning, according to the pessimistic major, was likewise declining.

The winter of 1788-9 was one of extraordinary severity, experienced all over Europe. Rome was no exception, and the cold was doubly felt as there were no appliances for keeping out draughts or heating the enormous rooms.

Thusnelda writes to Goethe: "We are trying to keep up the illusion that we are in a warm climate, but it is a pretence; the truth is, we are as cold here as you are in Weimar, with far fewer facilities for defending ourselves against the biting wind, which penetrates through our weak defences. There is no talk now of expeditions, or running here and there; we sit at home and long for a good fire. The duchess is leaving for Naples in the hope that Vesuvius may warm her frozen body; a curious result of coming to Italy. We shall resume our unfinished sight-seeing on our return, as the duchess has taken a villa for

the spring situated on the Trinità de Monte, said to be the healthiest part in Rome and quite close to Angelica."

Herder corroborates Thusnelda's report of the weather. "It is merciless weather here," he writes to Goethe. "Every one who is not accustomed to it is out of spirits and discontented, except our duchess, who is always well content and in good spirits. The pope sent her a present yesterday." He goes on to say that Anna Amalia is much taken up with music, and has here the very best. "Besides the concerts given by Bernis, Ruspoldi has had four, at which we had the most lovely music, as he had the very best musicians."

Herder then proceeds to unfold a project of his, which he entreats Goethe to carry out—"For you know," he says, "better than I do what a change our duchess will feel when she returns to Weimar and finds so little to attract her. Could you not form a musical society which could perform those concerted pieces she loves so well, and also have supervision over the theatre, get a good opera company, etc.? I spoke of this to Einsiedel, who quite agreed that it would be an excellent thing, if only it could be arranged. Think over this and

do the best, otherwise I very much fear she will feel leaving here greatly, for she has so many occupations and is made so much of, while in Weimar there is nothing for her to do.

“On the other hand, I have not very pleasant impressions of my stay here. Everything has been more or less of a disappointment. At all events, my experience, although bought dearly enough, will be of use. I will look well, and on all sides, before I take such a journey again. However, I am determined not to walk in your footsteps and return home “indifferent to all human beings,” which would be more unpleasant for me than for you, since I have no art world wherein to find consolation for the extinction of present joys. I may truly say I have *never* felt so cold in my appreciation of art as since I have seen the beginning, the growth, and the finish, as they are here demonstrated before one’s eyes.

“Perhaps I am influenced by the fact that “poor Tom’s a-cold.” I am literally frozen, and when one is frozen through and through, one can neither speak nor think nor feel, one can scarcely see or hear, and least of all learn how to speak. If ever I reach home again I will get you to tell me what you

saw and what I *didn't* see. I shall keep my mouth shut. I fear—I very much fear—that you no longer care for Germany, whereas I have travelled to Rome to become a true German, and if I could I would colonise this country with Germans. If I ever get back and ever get warm again, I will write a treatise entitled 'Rome in the Year of Our Lord 1789,' and I hope I may be able to put this plan into execution.

"Farewell, dear friend. My fingers are too cold to hold the pen ; my heart is frozen and my soul is an icicle. Farewell ! Give my greetings to the duke and duchess, and to any one who may perchance remember me.

"HERDER."

That Herder exaggerated slightly, if not *the cold*, the moral depression from which he was suffering, is shown in a letter of Fräulein Göchhausen. "Herder goes with us to Naples. He seems to wish to attach himself to us. That is what I always wished he would do ; *he is in good spirits*, has many acquaintances, enjoys himself, and is very popular !"

The duchess also writes long letters to Goethe

and to Wieland, to whom she gives an account of her visit to the museum in the Vatican by torch-light, and poor old Wieland is in raptures.

“Indeed, your highness cannot conceive the benefit you confer on a poor deserted old man by writing to him such delightful letters, one of which is of more value to him than all the epistles in the world, from those of Phalaris to those of St. Paul inclusive. Your highness will probably consider this comparison as one of those florid compliments in which such a well-known courtier as I am would be likely to indulge, and, out of an excess of modesty, you may refuse to believe that your little notes could compare in importance with the letters of Cicero to Atticus or St. Paul to the Corinthians. Still, it is none the less true that the aforesaid little scribbles have more interest for me, and give me the most agreeable sensations by which my frozen heart revives from the dejection produced by the gloom of November and the absence of my princess. But the knowledge that you are well and happy, and that in the midst of a circle, which naturally tends to banish thoughts of the past and recollections of the absent, you should have remembered your



old friend, whose life is now nothing but a memory of the past—this, I say, shows such a good heart, that I feel consoled to think that I shall never be quite forgotten.”

Some people may think this the letter of a courtier, but to me it seems to have a ring of real, sincere affection. “Der alte Wieland” (and yet he was not an old man, according to the present age standard) was of an affectionate nature, and very sensitive to kindness; he followed with the deepest interest every incident of the duchess’s tour, and was enthusiastic about Cicero and the Roman Senators. Fräulein Göchhausen declared he knew more than all the *cognoscenti* in Rome, as was proved by his translation of Horace, and his notes on the Satires and Epistles, which the travellers studied most diligently.

The duchess and her party (including Herder) arrived in Naples on January 14th, 1789. On February 3rd we have Thusnelda writing in rapturous delight to Wieland: “Oh, dear friend, what a country is this! Truly the land of milk and honey. Climate, vegetation, people, all and everything is wonderful. A third enchantment is music, for Naples is the birth-

place of music. We have here a collection of better voices than all Italy can produce, Marchesini excepted. In Paesiello's opera *Cato* there are three magnificent singers, Bariti, the prima donna, David, the tenor, and Crescentini, the first tenor; all the rest would have been considered with us first-rate artists, but their light is eclipsed by the three just named.

"Paesiello is a very pleasant man, and his face at once conveys the impression that the world treats him well. He comes to the duchess on evenings when there is no opera; he plays and sings for her his operas. The Archbishop of Tarento, Capececiattolo,<sup>1</sup> is also here; he is an excellent man—Herder thinks much of him—and is quite different from our bishops. He and the duchess are friends; he is intellectual, artistic, and talented. We have also made acquaintance with Abbé Fortis, a worthy and interesting man. The duchess does not go into society here, but she receives some of the best people."

When the severe weather had passed the duchess and her suite returned, on February 20th, to Rome, fortunately in time for the ceremonies of Holy Week.

<sup>1</sup> See page 455.

Fräulein Gochhausen writes to Wieland, on March 17th, 1789 :

“ You know all about the ceremonies which take place during Holy Week in the Sistine Chapel much better than I do, who have seen them. Can any one forget the strains of the *Miserere* by Allegri and Palestrina, and the devotion of the kneeling multitude, the processions of the cross, with pope, cardinals, bishops, etc., all singing hymns ; the lighting of the church ; the illumination of the cross ? On Good Friday the pope and the cardinals on their knees in the middle of St. Peter’s, the thousands of human beings, and the magical effect of the sudden change from gloom and darkness to the brilliant illumination of the enormous building, the blessing given by the holy father after High Mass on Easter Sunday from the balcony of St. Peter’s to the multitude gathered to receive it— all these magnificent ceremonials are impossible to describe.”

Thusnelda’s description of the *Miserere* is worth noting :

“ The *Miserere*, sung by thirty voices, does not sound like singing or instrumentation, or harmony of any sort, but it is a union of the best portion of

these three units which presents the most celestial—I should call it harmony—ever heard on earth. Truly an angelic choir.” She describes the pope’s blessing in the same enraptured terms, and the extraordinary silence of the immense multitude of sixty thousand people on their knees, while the one figure standing, as it were, “between heaven and earth,” gave the blessing. “Then the cannons thundered and the bells rang out. It was as if the whole earth were making festival.”

At the end of the letter she says : “ We see our Angelica (Kaufmann) almost every day ; her garden is only separated by a little mount from ours. She generally spends with us every evening that we are at home ; she is an excellent woman. Our beloved duchess is well and happy. She sends you a thousand remembrances and good wishes, and I am to tell you that, if only you and a few more of her prized friends were here, she would be as happy as any one could be on this terrestrial globe of ours. We all look forward to seeing you again as one of our pleasantest prospects, and I assure you that, in spite of all our enjoyments here (and *I* certainly have never had in my life so many pleasures as since I came here), the thought of our return to

Weimar and the pleasure of seeing again my own little room is constantly present to my mind. When will that be? I hope sooner than your incredulity believes.

“The duchess wishes to return to beautiful Partenope (Naples) once more, to see it in all its beauty at the best season; therefore she has settled on remaining this summer in Italy. This is the advice of all who know the country; they recommend the sea air as making the heat more bearable; but we all hope to return in the autumn. Herder desires me to give you his remembrances. You will soon see him. His Penelope and little Telemachus are the syrens which draw away our Ulysses, and he dares not, though he fain would, be deaf to their song.”

Herder left Rome on May 14th, 1789, in spite of all the efforts made by the duchess to induce him to come to Naples. In these efforts she was assisted by Madame Angelica, who, to speak the unvarnished truth, had set up one of her “friendships” with Herder. This otherwise estimable woman had one fault,—admitted by her biographers—*vanity beyond that of most women*, which induced her to accept homage, especially the homage of men of

genius. It was a perfectly harmless vanity and not calculated to arouse any jealousy in the mind of Zucchi (who, for the rest, knew the excellence of Angelica's beautiful character).

The correspondence with Herder is interesting, as showing the singular influence Angelica exerted over men's minds, even at an age when such influence is supposed to cease ; and likewise as giving an insight into her life, and confirming the testimony of Goethe that she was hard put to it to provide money for the household. Zucchi was undoubtedly avaricious, as the future disclosed. He was saving his own money and spending hers, hardly earned as it was. "Der alte Zucchi ist geizig,"<sup>1</sup> writes the Duchess Amalia in one of her letters, and Herder alludes several times to Angelica as a victim sacrificed in every way to the greed of her father and husband.

It will be remembered that the German philosopher arrived in Rome after Goethe had left it. He came in the company of Baron von Dalberg and Frau von Seckendorf, travelling at the charges of the baron, and the story of his many discomforts and his final rupture with his friend has been already told. One of his first visits was paid to Angelica,

<sup>1</sup> "Old Zucchi is avaricious."

and he gives his impressions of her in a letter to his wife :—

“ROME,

“September 21st.

“I have just been to Angelica ; she is a delicate, tender soul, artistic to her finger-tips, extraordinarily simple, *without any bodily charm*, but extremely interesting. Her principal attraction is her simplicity and extreme purity ; she reminds me of a Madonna, or a little dove. Alas ! for art and for the world generally, she is growing old. She lives retired in an ideal world, which she shares with the little birds and the flowers. Poor old Zucchi is a good sort of man in his own way ; he resembles a Venetian nobleman in a comedy.”

By-and-by he grows more eloquent :—

“These last few weeks have been purified and brightened by my friendship with Angelica. Oh ! what torments might I have spared myself had I only known earlier this noble creature, who lives shy and retired as a heavenly being. Since my return from Naples, I have drawn nearer to her, and *she is dearer to me* than all else in Rome. I am so happy with her ; she, on her side, regards me with the *deepest reverence*,<sup>1</sup> while of thee she

<sup>1</sup> There was very little reverence in Caroline Herder's character.

speaks tenderly and with a certain timidity. She looks upon thee as one of the *happiest of women*. The impression this gifted creature has made upon my mind is indelible ; it will last my whole life, for she is utterly devoid of envy, free from vanity, and incapable of insincerity. She knows not what meanness is, and, although she is perhaps the most cultivated woman in Europe, is full of the sweetest humility and the most angelic innocence. I tell thee all this, my own, because I know that from thee I need hide nothing, and because thou wilt rejoice with me that after my bitter months of solitude, I have found this pearl, or rather lily, which heaven has vouchsafed to me as a blessing and reward. It is in this light that I regard her."

Caroline Herder was no doubt an amiable woman and an excellent wife ; her letters prove this ; but she must have been sorely tried when post after post brought her rhapsodies of this sort over the perfections of another woman. Here is another when the friendship had considerably advanced.

"ROME,

"April 1st.

"Angelica sends thee a tender souvenir—it came on Easter Day ; a little ring, which I am to put



on thy finger, and with it now I seal this letter. On this side of the Alps I may look on it as mine own, and on my return give it to thee from thy sister. No one knows of this little present except the good Reiffenstein, who ordered it for her. It is, indeed, a faithful symbol of her pure, tender soul, for truly friendship and love are one. So she represents her sweet soul as a tiny sparrow resting upon a branch of myrtle, a type that our union shall exist, absent or present. *Say nothing of this to any one*, but take the remembrance as it is meant, in good part. A purer, more exquisite creature does not exist on earth. Like to a pious victim, she has all her life been sacrificed to her art, for it she has lived and still lives ; now she is nearly fifty years old, and it is still the same.

“ She loves me with a warm affection, and I love and honour her as a saint. Do not, however, believe, my dearest wife, that my affection for her would keep me one day longer in Rome than it is right for me to remain. Angelica would be the first to advise me to go, if she saw me inclined to stay, for, with all her tenderness, she has a strong and almost masculine mind. Therefore, it is that I reckon so strongly upon her sympathy, and see

such a wonderful dispensation in this friendship. I regard it as the germ of far more in the future, and neither time nor absence shall interrupt it. It is, I think, a reward for my undertaking this journey, a panacea for all I have undergone, and thou also, my dearest, must look upon it from this point of view. The birth of this friendship has awakened in me a tardy prudence and a resolution to live henceforth for thee and my dear ones, for now I feel more strengthened in good than I have ever been."

In a letter dated April 20th he makes allusions to Angelica's lonely life, unblessed by children, and adds: "But she is, indeed, an angel of a woman, and her goodness sets the balance right between me and others of her sex, who have served me ill. She has the activity of a man, and has done more than fifty men would have done in the time. In goodness of heart she is a celestial being. I gave her thy kiss as it stood in thy letter, *without transferring it to her lips*. 'Once I did kiss her on the forehead, and once she unexpectedly seized my hand and would press it to her lips. *There*, that is all between us! I thank my God that He allowed me to know this pure soul, and that through her I

carry away one pleasant memory from Rome. She is with us constantly, sometimes with the duchess, who loves her on account of her great modesty. I am with her every moment I can spare. She came unexpectedly to Frascati, and I do not know if she will also come to Tivoli.

“Thou must love Angelica for my sake, for she deserves it, the strangely tender, loving soul ; she knows thee, and we speak of thee often, and then she says softly she esteems thee to be very happy. The story which you heard from Frau von Stein<sup>1</sup> is false, although I myself do not know the true history of the affair. Once she began to tell it to me, but her grief at the recollection would not let her finish. Take the letter she sends thee kindly ; she is not strong in words, but in deeds a most honest soul. English and Italian she speaks and writes beautifully. German is to her almost a strange language.<sup>2</sup> Her best wishes accompany me when I go, and her friendship *for us both* will last

<sup>1</sup> Frau von Stein had told Madame Herder that in her youth Angelica had married a villain, who thought she was rich, and had run away with her money and jewels. This was Horn, the valet, who had already a wife. It was the dark shadow underlying Angelica's life.

<sup>2</sup> Her letters to Goethe are full of mistakes in spelling.

as long as we live. This is the confession of my heart's feelings while in Rome, written only for thee, for I must and always shall write to thee what fills my heart."

This ingenuous confession of his inmost feelings, together with the kissing passages, did not altogether please Madame Herder. She writes to her husband that she feels like Ariadne deserted by Theseus, and urges his return to his home and family. Herder's answer is an amusing lucubration intended to calm any little jealousy that may have arisen in his wife's mind, and impress upon her Angelica's friendship for *her*.

"I count Angelica amongst my true friends. In years, she *is much older than I am*, and she is more a spiritual than a corporeal being. She is, however, a true heart, there are few like her, and through hearing constantly of thee from me, she loves thee also. So in every way she is worthy of being joined to us by a close bond of friendship. She often says to me that the whole happiness of her life depends upon the continuance of this bond ; that she would wish to die now, since she has (though truly for but such a short time) seen and known me ; it is to her as a dream.

“I write to thee, my dearest, everything, because it is my habit so to do. Thou knowest that these words of hers do not make me vain, but rather humble. I look upon the friendship of this dear and noble woman as a gift that heaven has sent me, which has turned me from all else, and in a theoretic manner has elevated my thoughts and exalted my whole being, for she charms the mind, purifies and softens it, and is a good, tender creature. Do love her for my sake, dearest ; she is so good, and her life is not happy. For the remainder of our poor lives we must do all things to please this willing victim to art. She sends you a thousand greetings. I told her yesterday when I saw her for a few moments, that this day would be the anniversary of our wedding-day, and so, if it be possible, I am to go to her this evening, and we will bear you and the children in remembrance.”

In the postscript to this same letter, he adds the following :—

“When I went this evening to Angelica, she with infinite grace slipped into my hand a little gold chain as a remembrance of to-day ; she said it was for us both. She is in every way a sweet, angelic and pure woman. Thou must promise an

eternal friendship to her, and with me render thanks to heaven who has given her to me to know and to love."

On May 9th, Herder writes to his Caroline an account of an expedition to Tivoli, to which Madame Angelica came unexpectedly.

"Her silent, modest grace," he says, "gives the tone to the company she is amongst ; like a chord of music she is in harmony with all. Oh, what an exquisite nature is hers—a nature like to thine own, my dear one ; like thee, she makes no claim upon our admiration, but it is full of sympathy and tender feeling for others. I leave Rome content, now that I have been to Tivoli."

Then he goes on about Caroline's journey to Carlsbad, and concludes as follows :—

"My best and dearest, do not constrain thyself, if thou wouldst prefer to remain at home. Thou hast received by this time my letter, and wilt know how best to decide. It was thy remark as to feeling like 'Ariadne' which gave rise to the idea in my mind. But fear not. Where could I go but to thee? Everything draws me to thee, and thou wilt no longer find me rough and fierce, but gentle, tender, forbearing. Oh, I have learned, if I never

knew it before, what I have in thee. Also, fear nothing from the Angelica friendship. She is the best woman in the world ; the most thoroughly honest ; besides, her mind and mine are turned to other things. As I have many times repeated, she is truly modest ; she honours thee as a sort of divinity, and loves me in a spiritual manner. She greets thee affectionately, and thou canst receive this greeting from *my hand*. She is in truth an angel. At Tivoli her silhouette was taken, which I shall send you in my next."

His next is the last of this remarkable series of letters.

"May 13<sup>th</sup>, 1789.

"Well then, in God's name, my trunk is packed. All is ready ; to-morrow I leave Rome for Pisa. I am well, and, all things considered, have had a time in Rome of which few strangers can boast.

\* \* \* \* \*

"Angelica, who is dear and good beyond all expression, greets thee cordially, and sends thee her silhouette. Take it with feelings of love and kindness. The angel has made me during these last weeks inexpressibly happy. I would I had known her earlier : the good, excellent, tender,

beautiful soul. She likes me as much as I do her ; our friendship will grow stronger year by year, for it is founded upon the purest esteem and love. So too, must thou, if thou wilt please me, take her cordially to thy heart. Thou wilt do so when thou knowest her better, the tender, loving creature. The duchess esteems her highly ; so do all who come in contact with her, for she lives and acts as a beneficent being. To-day I dine with her, and to-morrow we take our last drive together. May Heaven bless and preserve this sweet woman ! Farewell, my good soul, no longer to be a desolate Ariadne. Farewell ! think joyfully of my return. I am far happier than I deserve to be."

Herder's hopes as to the continuance of this friendship do not seem to have been realised. Whether Madame Herder, as a wife sometimes does, put her foot down upon the intimacy founded upon the "purest lines of love and esteem," or whether Herder himself, with the erratic nature of a genius, grew tired of his worship of this beneficent being, does not appear. The letters which he may have written shared the same fate as those of Goethe. The only one quoted by Angelica's biographer is written in a cold strain, very unlike his former



rapturous expressions. In his case it is evident that, contrary to the poet's assertion, absence did not make his heart grow fonder. All through this curious correspondence of Herder's, allowance, however, must be made for the nature of the poet-philosopher, which was high-strung, sensitive and altogether Teutonic. His *seelen-sentimentalität* meant very little, certainly nothing dangerous. Yet it cannot be disputed that the friendship and admiration of such men as Herder and Goethe is a rare testimony to the worth and attractions of Angelica.

During all this time Anna Amalia had done her best to reassure the absent "Ariadne," as we may see from the following letter :—

"ROME,

"March 1st, 1789.

"TO CAROLINE HERDER,—

"As I know well that your dear second self writes regularly to his better-half and tells her all about himself and also about us and what we are doing, I have not been in a hurry to write to you, but waited, dear Frau Herder, until now. I must write now to tell you that I have won a victory (a small one) over Herder. It is true he will not acknowledge it, for a strong man does not like to

be conquered by a weak woman; nevertheless, it is a fact.

“In the beginning I did all that was possible to draw him away from his philosophy and to make him one of us. All in vain, it was not to be done. I grew angry at last, and I acknowledge that I did tempt him with the charms of lovely Partenope<sup>1</sup> as set against his dry study of philosophy. She caressed him, called him her favourite son. Our philosopher smiled, he grew more lively, he returned the tenderness shown him; then cold wisdom stepped in, and, growing jealous of Partenope, tried to overcome her attractions by throwing cold water on his enthusiasm for her rival, who in her turn flattered at her conquest, sought in every way to secure him. She called to her help a veritable syren,<sup>2</sup> a beautiful enchantress, who, through her form, her voice, her enchanting attitudes, the very perfection of Greek art, fairly enraptured him.

“Wisdom’s dry teaching, philosophy itself, was forgotten; an electric spark touched his heart and filled it with a new sensation; his whole being thrilled with a new sense of life, joy, and blessedness;

<sup>1</sup> Naples.

<sup>2</sup> This seems to indicate Emma Hart, afterwards Lady Hamilton.

it was a new creation. Philosophy, however, did not desert him ; she made a fierce attack on him, and, alas ! won the victory." The duchess adds that Herder will not remain in Rome much longer, " His thoughts and looks are all directed to the north, where all his dear ones are. You can be quite easy about your husband's future, the gods wish him well ; he will return to you with a faithful heart and a contented spirit.

" Think of me sometimes and greet the children for me.

" AMALIA."

To Knebel, Anna Amalia writes, beginning her letter with an allusion to the classics :

" In Virgil's ' Eneid ' you will find an accurate description of what is now before my eyes ; and how I wish you were with me to contemplate its wonders ! " <sup>1</sup> She goes on to say that, " Poor old Herder is getting better since he came to live with us ; he is called here ' The Archbishop, ' and I am congratulated on having so distinguished a man in my suite. He is very popular, especially with the ladies—nevertheless, his dear little wife has nothing to fear, for he is as faithful to her as a general

<sup>1</sup> Vesuvius.

superintendent.”<sup>1</sup> She does not quite understand whether Wieland is in joke or earnest when he writes that he is coming with bag and baggage, children included, to Naples, “Where a humble existence with good health would be better than the wealth of Cræsus in the bleak Thuringian mountains.” Anna Amalia answered this outburst with the ironical observation that she did not think he would relish living amongst the “Lazzaroni.”

Herder writes of his home-coming July 16th, 1789 :

“On the 9th of this month I arrived in Weimar, at two o'clock in the morning. There was nothing to greet me, but the most lovely moon on one side of the heavens, and on the other the first gleam of the rising sun. In my house all was ready for me, only I had no key and I was obliged to wait while my wife let her lover escape into the garden by the back door. When I got in there was great joy amongst the big and the little. Since then I have been playing the *rôle* of the idol Baal. I eat, drink, sleep, and talk. The German wine and food

<sup>1</sup> These remarks of Anna Amalia recall Talleyrand's acute observation, that “Not even one's best friend speaks *of us* as he speaks *to us*.”

suit me well after my journey of two months. Further than this I can do nothing. Laziness is the product of a residence in Italy, which I prophesy even your highness will on your return experience. One feels like a pendulum, which has been constantly swinging, but now only vibrates in oneself. The whole journey seems to me like a dream from which I have wakened. A pleasant dream it was, and your highness is the central figure of my dream, the good fairy who made it pleasant. Dreams have made up much of my life, and the dream has often been better than the reality. So it appears to me now. To *me*—but your highness has better dreams than I have.”

## CHAPTER VI

TWO days before Herder wrote this letter to the duchess, and quite unknown to him, Europe was shaken to its centre by the news of the terrible events taking place in France. The spirit of revolt, which had long been seething in the minds of the French nation, had now burst forth, and the first torch of what was to prove a universal conflagration was kindled at the storming of the Bastille. Soon France was the scene of disorder and pillage. The poor-spirited Louis XVI., unable to grapple with such a situation, made matters worse by his ill-timed concessions, and drifted helplessly to his doom. One does not feel so much compassion for this *roi fainéant* as for his high-spirited queen; but the terrible tragedy, which was later to fill Europe with dismay, was in 1789 in its first chapter.

All thinking minds viewed the prospect with dismay. Not alone France, but Europe generally

was ripe for the coming war; it needed only a match to ignite the powder-horn and cause an universal explosion. The King of Prussia, in view of the gloomy seven years' campaign of Frederick the Great, felt himself constrained to threaten Austria with war, if that country meddled with France: not that the Emperor Joseph II. had any idea of burning his fingers by trying to help his relatives. The general feeling of the country was decidedly against fighting. Moreover, the revolutionary spirit did not go beyond a good deal of talk, as in the case of the Stolbergs, Jacobys, and Frau Rathin. Goethe, who was a republican of a mild order. Klopstock and Kant were bound to make some demonstration, but their cry of "Liberty and Equality" was intellectual rather than political. Wieland, who was so little a supporter of despots as to have hardly raised his hat to Frederick the Great, sent a cosmopolitan address to the National Assembly. Herder was also more for than against the Revolution. But it was only skin-deep with these two men and they soon awoke from their patriotic semi-revolutionary dreams when they witnessed the results.

Meanwhile Amalia was still at Naples, where she

received a letter from Knebel, dated August 3rd, 1789, eulogising the proceedings in France, which he declares will now be the first nation in Europe. Its action, he considers, "a proof of greatness of mind and sympathy with the general good, and this alone is sufficient to make France the *first of nations*. History cannot offer a finer example. That is what Italy will never learn, and therefore I beg your highness to return to us with your heart unchanged."

The answer of the duchess shows how much more clear-sighted was her judgment of the situation.

"NAPLES,

"September 16th, 1789.

"I do not pretend to predict the consequences of the French Revolution, or give any judgment upon the matter. I think one can apply to the present situation the words of a certain Grecian Senator who said to Solon: '*Chez vous les sages discutent et les fous décident.*' Up to the present it is nothing but anarchy; whether any good can come of it time must decide. Several French refugees, princes with families, are expected here."

Also Karl August writes to his mother from



Eisenach, where both he and Goethe have been making improvements.

“What do you say to the French Revolution? I would give much (you know I am a lover of new institutions) to have been an eye-witness of this incomprehensible and wonderful upheaval. I hope that your return will produce a revolution here. I look forward to this, and to seeing you in renewed health and spirits.”

Karl August did not expect much good to follow from the Revolution, for the reason that the French nation was “so devoid of morality”; and writing from Aschersleben to the Duchess Anna Amalia, on September 27th, '89, he says: “We have serpents round us from which we can only be delivered by the sword. Nevertheless, I am rejoiced that my dear mother is returning to us.” And then he touches on a delicate subject in a manner that gives the reader a high opinion of his sense and good feeling.

“If the misunderstandings which were a source of trouble to you should again arise, you must try to remember that no human being can alter his peculiarities, or even appreciably soften them, and that to accomplish such a transformation would be the work of a lifetime. Will you promise me

(as I am now a man of ripe years and considerable experience) to give me for the future your full confidence, and if you have grievances to complain of, confide them to me, who love you better than any one, and who, being so nearly connected with you am more likely to be interested? I give you my solemn promise that the first time you complain of any grievance, the matter shall be most carefully investigated, in order that anything displeasing to you may be rectified, and, if necessary for your comfort, the cause shall be removed. Of course it is understood that the trouble must be one arising from some condition of circumstances or surroundings which can be altered.

“Let us, dear mother, for the future talk over these matters together. The obstacles to your comfort will disappear, and we shall be able to form a correct judgment as to what are mere trifles not worth considering, and what are inevitable necessities which must be accepted. In this way I trust the rest of our lives may pass contentedly.”

We are left in the dark as to how Anna Amalia received this affectionate and sensible advice. Neither do we know what was the exact subject of the text; but we can form a guess. That

both duchesses were estimable and amiable women did not affect the issue, but no doubt the friction was intensified by the tittle-tattle of the court and the carrying of stories.

For the rest, the moment was approaching when, in the face of a universal calamity, both women recognised the good qualities of each other.

This was, however, in the distance. Anna Amalia was still in Naples. "Our beloved princess," writes Thusnelda to Wieland, "sends you a thousand good wishes, is well and is loved and admired by every one. The queen will not hear of our leaving, but our duchess is getting anxious to return, and the conflict is giving her pain. For my part," she adds, "I wish I could forget that I must leave this lovely spot." And again, writing on November 17th, she repeats: "I am quite ashamed that my heart is so bound up in this place and this delightful people." In another letter she describes an expedition made by the duchess along the coast of the Adriatic, during which they slept in a Venetian monastery. Here a crowd assembled and begged for an audience of the duchess, and on this being granted there came forward a number of poets, each of whom recited extempore verses. Scenes like

this were pleasing to Anna Amalia's somewhat romantic temperament ; they endeared Italy to her, and made her reluctant to quit a land, where poetry and sentiment were the keynote of every life.

Meantime changes were going on in Weimar. One of these which had to do with Herder had greatly interested the duchess. In July 1789 Herder had received a call to the University of Göttingen as Professor, being allowed to make his own conditions. This was flattering. At the same time it involved leaving Weimar, to which he was bound by so many ties, which he could not bear to break. On this subject, Goethe writes to Anna Amalia : " Herder has a wife and children, and he cannot sacrifice their interests to his own inclinations." Anna Amalia quite sees this, and so does Karl August, for Goethe, writing to the duchess, tells her the duke has been generous, but still there was a difficulty remaining, the education of the boy. Will the duchess charge herself with this ? And the duchess gladly agreed, and so the matter was settled. Herder remained at Weimar, with the official rank of consistorial vice-president and a salary of four hundred thalers (£60) a year. Caroline Herder was quite content with this high-

sounding title and increased means. She declared that having already lived in Weimar thirteen years, and having on the whole received more good than bad treatment, she would be loath to quit it.

This was not very warm acknowledgment, but poor Caroline, on the other hand, was worn out with the anxiety as to how the affair would turn. She did not want to leave Weimar, and she was too weary to express herself prettily, and Anna Amalia understood. Later on, in October, the "vice-president's" lady has quite recovered her spirits and writes very warmly and gratefully to the duchess. After expressing her gratitude she goes on: "Goethe and Herder spend one evening in every week together, but they never speak of Italy. This is agreed upon, for the reason that it is too painful. From the same cause they defer asking any questions until the return of their royal patroness." Then she adds that she has grown "very old" and cannot replace to Herder the fascination which so attracted him in Italy. (This is an allusion to the Angelica episode.)

Herder sends the duchess a birthday ode, and Karl August felicitates his mother on what is to him the most loved and honoured day of the year.

Wieland contributes a somewhat maudlin poem, full of "loving and longing," and, in return for all these good wishes, Anna Amalia writes the good news that she looks forward to being back in Weimar in March. But again there is delay. Brother Frederick Augustus of Brunswick has lost his wife, and Anna Amalia persuades him to come to Italy, "the Lethe of all sorrow, where one grows young again." The arrival of the Brunswick relations naturally detains the loving sister, and the people in Weimar shake their heads, while Karl August grows somewhat testy. "There is a time for all things," he says, "and it is time my mother returned to Weimar."

A wilful woman generally has her own way, and, in spite of all efforts to move her, the new year, 1790, found Anna Amalia still at Naples. How could she tear herself away from this enchanting land, where even Vesuvius honoured her by a slight eruption? "It was majestic. Never in my life have I experienced such a sensation," writes the duchess; and Fräulein Göchhausen adds: "Was there ever such a country? Here we have summer—lemons, pinks, roses, and jasmine, all growing in our garden." It seemed a

pity to leave all this brightness and return to the dreary cold north.

Herder touches on this in a letter to the duchess, January 25th, 1790: "Memory is perhaps the purest of enjoyments, and as such lasts the longest ; therefore I feel convinced that your highness will imitate the philosophy of the guest, who rose from the banquet leaving much of the feast untouched. Yes, I feel convinced you will return to us happy and content."

As a matter of fact, the preacher of this excellent doctrine did not practise it ; but this is not extraordinary, being a common phase of human frailty. Herder's health was, moreover, giving anxiety to his friends ; he was captious and discontented, and a coldness had arisen between him and Goethe, certainly through no fault of the latter. The appointment of Schiller, on Goethe's recommendation, to be Professor of History at Jena, had probably roused Herder's jealousy. He loudly declared he was not going to be "a dupe" any longer. The Göttingen appointment had, however, soothed his bad temper, which for the rest was partly due to his illness.

At Easter 1790 Goethe set out for Venice, where

he was to await the duchess and her party, and conduct them to Weimar. He had, however, a long wait, for still the duchess delayed, making one excuse after the other, while Goethe, who had many reasons for wishing to get home again, distracted his mind by making an excursion into the Tyrol.<sup>1</sup>

Finally, on May 2nd, the duchess and her suite arrived in Venice, where she spent some weeks, nominally resting after her journey from Rome, but in reality enjoying the last glimpse she would have of Italy. "You must remember," she writes to her brother, "that from my sixteenth year I have lived for others, and it is only since I came to Italy that I have lived for myself."

But her holiday, like all pleasant experiences, came to an end at last, and after she had exhausted every possible excuse for delay, she with much grief of heart set out for Weimar under the escort of Goethe. Leaving Venice on May 22nd, they arrived in Nuremberg on June 9th, where Knebel met his beloved patroness, and on June 18th, 1790, she reached Weimar again.

<sup>1</sup> "The account of the expenses of this expedition kept by his servant, Paul Götze, shows how cheaply one could live and travel in Germany in 1790."—"Goethe's Life," by Dr. S. M. Prem, Leipzig.



Many of us have experienced the flatness which oppresses one, on returning to the monotony of everyday life after a season of rest from domestic cares. Remembrance of the pleasanter scenes we have quitted makes the dulness of the old routine all the more difficult to bear. Neither had Anna Amalia the joy of meeting her son, which would have compensated her mother's heart for much. Karl August was on military duty in Prussia. The outlook was gloomy and all nations were preparing for what seemed looming in the near future. Nor was the social atmosphere at Weimar more satisfactory. Much had happened during Anna Amalia's absence, and a general discontent and dulness had succeeded to the former gaiety of the little capital. Nor was Amalia herself free from a feeling of discontent.

"Since my return to Thuringia," she writes to Knebel, on August 3rd, 1790, "I am not in my usual spirits. It seems to me as if I had been asleep, and that my dream was one of delightful days which I had spent in lovely Italy ; but I have wakened to the prose of everyday life and my sweet dream is gone from me."

Soon, however, the duchess roused herself, and

returning to her former habits of study, drew round her a circle such as Weimar alone could offer. Writing from Belvedere to her constant correspondent Knebel, she says :

" BELVEDERE,

" *August*, 1790.

" I am busy forming a circle. Herder, Wieland, and Goethe always come to me. I have invited Herder to stay here to make use of the water of the well, which is a natural spa. Goethe unfortunately must go to the duke in Silesia. I trust, as there is now peace, that my son will come at the end of August. I have little August Herder with me, and he is an amusing, bright little fellow. I am arranging the art treasures I brought home from Italy ; they form quite a little museum. Thus I live—in the enjoyment of the past, and seek as far as in my power lies to share this enjoyment with others."

In November 1791 she again writes from the Witthums Palais, Weimar :

" I have been settled here for some days now. The leaves have begun to fall and I can see nothing of my beloved hills but naked trees, which do not form the prettiest background to Nature's

stage. In the town it is not much better, but I occupy myself in arranging my Italian curios and so keep my mind occupied. Dear Knebel, kindly inform me which of the best cut stones, in your opinion, are the most valuable. I should like impressions, either in sealing-wax or sulphur." She goes on to say she has been to Erfurt, where the national assembly had been held. "My son Constantine," she adds, "has been with me for some days, and I find him much improved in every particular. The reports from his commanding officer, too, are satisfactory."

Amalia's correspondence at this period is wanting in its usual brightness. She was evidently feeling the change from the glorious sunshine and pleasant life in Italy. The general outlook was likewise depressing. There were rumours in the air which portended evil; a reaction against crowned heads and authority was agitating the oppressed lower class, and the restless demon of war was stirring up the different nationalities. Both Anna Amalia's sons were with the Prussian camp in Silesia, whither Goethe had also gone in July to join the duke, who told him that, instead of stones and flowers, he would see the field sown with troops.

Goethe, who was no soldier, compensated himself for the *ennui* he suffered, by studying the different families of "the stones and flowers." He lived like a hermit in the camp, and began to write an essay on the development of animals, and also a comic opera.

The Duchess Amalia, meantime, tried to distract her thoughts from the dark shadows that were gathering in every direction, by her usual panacea, occupation. She set about collecting from her journals and letters the most interesting extracts and observations on men and things. These, when put in order, she submitted to Herder for his opinion. Herder highly approved, only making some objection to a letter of Einsiedel's. For each portion of the letters sent him by Amalia, Herder had nothing but praise to give, to which he added his desire that others besides himself should be equally favoured.

Anna Amalia, however, like many amateurs, was not always inclined to finish what she had begun, but ever eager to start something afresh. We hear nothing more, therefore, of "the letters," but find her next engaged in reading the German classics as a help to translating Wieland's "Dialogues with

the gods," into Italian (1791?). This, having first submitted it to Jägemann, the principal librarian of the grand ducal library, she sent with a friendly greeting to her lady friends in Italy.

If Goethe had put into execution his idea of publishing his Italian travels, the duchess would have undertaken the translation. The dedication of Goethe's Venetian epigrams shows how deeply he was touched by this offer. But, to the annoyance of the Duchess Amalia and all his friends, Goethe, at this period of his life, was absorbed in scientific studies, thus leaving unemployed those higher mental gifts, which had been given him to use, not to bury. It is a curious freak of men of genius often to be met with, that, in place of concentrating themselves on the development of one particular talent, they wander over the whole field of literature, art, and science, turning themselves, as it were, into walking encyclopædias. Surely this is a mistake. As it happened, Goethe lived long enough to complete most of his works, but had he died earlier, *Wilhelm Meister* would have been left unfinished while he was making his experiments in osteology.

In 1791 Anna Amalia and Herder tormented him into resuming the ever-delightful *Wilhelm*, but he



1829.

1 Goethe.  
2 Schiller.  
3 Wieland.

4 Klopstock.  
5 Lessing.  
6 Herder.

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soon relinquished it for the study of dry bones, and his friends, including the two duchesses, began to be seriously alarmed, lest this great work should never be completed. At this period he lived retired, going nowhere, and was altogether absorbed in his scientific studies, which both Anna Amalia and Herder called "time wasted over old bones." The value of these studies could not, however, be lessened by any irreverent gibes.

Meanwhile a new star had risen in the poetic firmament, and its first rays lighted up Weimar. I refer to Schiller, than whom a more thoroughly interesting personality, or a more high-souled and romantic poet, has never lived. The long struggle of Schiller's life is most pathetic. Mention has already been made of the school, or college "speech day" at which the young and delicate student received in Goethe's presence the prizes he had gained. Goethe was now five and forty, and Schiller thirty-five, a pale, sickly-looking man, poorly dressed and poorly fed. The composer of *Don Carlos* and *Wallenstein*, had to support life by translations for which he only received a miserable sum, not enough to feed him.

His life is sad to read, and the inroads made



on his constitution by want of proper nourishment enfeebled him. He died, at a comparatively early age, and in the last years of his life he could only write under the fillip of constant draughts of champagne. He had not yet written *Wallenstein* when he first came to Weimar, where we get a glimpse of him from Henrietta von Eggloffstein. It was at the Witthums Palais. "A brilliant gathering was collected: Goethe, Wieland, Herder, Knebel were there, and in the middle, talking to Anna Amalia, stood the poet Schiller, quiet and collected, with eyes clear as the moon over which no stormy clouds would ever pass."

Not alone did he resemble the tranquil moon in his quiet demeanour, but also in the modest manner in which he retired when the fiery planet of the day (Goethe) took his place. Yet Goethe was very good to Schiller. He got for him the appointment at Jena, which relieved him from all financial worries. Truly, as Goethe's biographer says: "The history of literature presents nothing comparable to the friendship of Goethe and Schiller." Naturally antagonistic to one another, the tenderness shown on one side towards the man who bore, in his whole appearance, the traces of the bitter struggle he had gone through,

and the gratitude felt by the other for the protecting, almost fatherly, interest evinced towards him—these two feelings completely stamped out all the lower instincts of jealous rivalry.

Of course, the public did its best to sow discord, instead of following Goethe's advice, and rejoicing that it had "two such poets to boast of." There was the usual crying up of one against the other. Schiller, whose modesty was one of his many charms, confessed his inferiority. "Compared with Goethe, I am but a poetical bungler," he writes to Körner. Each had his admirers, Goethe being more appreciated by men, while Schiller's delicacy of touch, his tender love passages, etc., gained him the love of women. There was also a total absence of the freedom of thought and language, which made Goethe not suitable for "the young person," who in days of which I write had not emancipated herself so completely as in this century of progress.

From the time Schiller came to Weimar he shared with Goethe the directorship of the theatre, where many of his plays were produced. Schiller's death took place in the spring of 1805. Goethe at this time was so ill that it was feared he too might die. He was just recovering when, in April, Schiller's

death caused him a relapse. "The half of my existence is gone from me," he wrote to Zelter. "My diary is a blank—the white pages intimate the blank in my life. In those days I took no interest in anything."



THE GOETHE AND SCHILLER MONUMENT.

*Presented by the Grand Duke Frederick of Baden. The work of Rudoly Kuntze, Dresden.*

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## CHAPTER VII

**I**N 1790 the position of the French royal family, together with the wave of revolution passing over Europe, alarmed all thinking minds. European statesmen dreaded the consequences of this first step, which might end in universal anarchy. An alliance was formed between Austria, Prussia, and Russia, with the result that the King of Prussia undertook to despatch an army of five columns to the Rhine. Prussia demanded from the different countries free transport and provisions for the troops at the usual rate of payment. Such payment was, however, not to be made until after the conclusion of the war.

The Duchy of Weimar was thus placed in a most difficult position, since an enormous body of troops, made still larger by the, to us, incomprehensible addition of a crowd of camp-followers, women and children, with servants, and numbers of dogs, who were attached to each

battalion, required to be fed at the expense of the country. Moreover, Karl August, being a general in the Prussian Army, Weimar had to furnish a certain contingent of troops with all necessary equipment. The duke thought that this equipment and the transport of troops to Silesia would prove only a pleasure trip, and would not mean war, since the Emperor Leopold wished for peace, and so did Russia; he imagined that the proposed mobilisation was only meant to intimidate the revolutionists.

With this sanguine outlook the duke at the end of July 1792 left Weimar for Coblenz, where the general air of gaiety convinced him that there was not much danger of a serious war. The town was full of French *émigrés* and French princes, teeming with gratitude to their allies. These affected a contemptuous tone in speaking of "ces misérables" as they called the *sansculottes*. This was part of the fool's paradise the royalists lived in, although it may be doubted if they really held the optimistic views they made pretence of. Meantime there was feasting and carousing in Cologne. The Archbishop of Trier entertained the princes and commanders of the Prussian army

of rescue, the allies pledged one another in bumpers of the archbishop's choicest wine ; the declaration made by the King of Prussia that Paris, the seat of all evil, should be erased from its place amongst the capitals of Europe was received with enthusiasm. This exploit was evidently considered a foregone conclusion.

On August 3rd, 1792, Karl August writes : "The news we get of the treatment the royal prisoners, and especially the king, receive, grows each day more alarming. It is not a newspaper lie, but an actual fact, that a portion of the Tuileries has been consumed by fire, and that the king's life is in the utmost danger. The residue of the Swiss guard have been put to death, and even amongst the people there has been considerable slaughter."

The Prussian troops had now set out on their march. We are told that Hogarth would have found innumerable subjects for his pencil, in the scenes which took place on the route ; as, for instance, when the welcome accorded in different towns to the hungry, wearied soldiers took the form of wreaths of roses to crown their martial brows, or it might be of a sacerdotal blessing



on their arms. Fortunately there were always excellent and thoughtful women to be found, who gave the exhausted soldiers fresh water to cool their burning thirst. But after all, water is not very satisfying.

Anna Amalia, meantime, had written to Karl August's secretary Weyland at the Camp Rübenach, July 1792, and requested him to send her news of the duke as often as possible ; and as these letters from Rübenach, as well as the correspondence between the duke and his mother, are preserved in the archives at Weimar, we can follow almost every step of this heartrending campaign, and obtain a realistic picture of this terrible chapter in the world's history. The sufferings of the Prussian army, from the highest official or royal prince, down to the scavengers, were terrible, and were borne with wonderful fortitude. Ill-fed inefficiently clothed, the men had to make long marches in the rainy season, when the whole country was like a wet sponge.

According to Weyland's account, discomfort on the march was less trying than the *ennui* of the long halt, which under the circumstances had to be made. Karl August, who persisted in looking

upon the war as a joke, summoned Goethe to the camp, where he arrived on August 17th, a few days after the capitulation of Longwy. The duke had a long story to tell his friend of all the hardships and privations he and his soldiers had endured. Goethe, who was eminently a man of peace, had no interest in the cause for which he was obliged to live, even temporarily, in a damp atmosphere, with no prospect but sheets of rain streaming continuously over the camp. Karl August, whose tent was like a small lake, had taken refuge in his "equipage," where he had reserved a dry seat for his friend.

Out of this swamp the army was at last delivered and arrived at Verdun, from which place Karl August wrote to his mother. This letter shows that the duke had ceased to regard the war as a matter of child's play.

"LOUVEMONT, BEFORE VERDUN,

*" October 12th, '92.*

" You have, my dearest mother, my warmest thanks for your recollection of my birthday. I trust I may be spared to spend a few more anniversaries contentedly with you, and where the thunders of war shall be silent, for, to speak frankly,

it is a terrible spectacle. I will say nothing of our experiences, but leave all that to Weyland. In the first place, I cannot get near the writing desk, because the tent itself is almost under water, and the floor is saturated. I must try and get a little room where I can write. All the Cavalry Generals are ill, with the exception of General Cunibe von Kalbreuth, who is detached. I also am one of the few generals who can still get about. I am in excellent health. I can only say that we must make haste to finish the campaign, as we are convinced that there is no chance of such a thing as a counter-revolution, or of a junction with the soldiers, and we are in a strange country, surrounded by enemies, where every one wishes us evil.

“Also, in view of this accursed weather, which makes it too risky to attempt a communication with our powder magazines, it would be foolish to risk a battle, which, even supposing we won, would not advance us much, as, although we might kill a lot of these fellows, their places would be at once taken by others; and in the meantime the enemy has secured the most advantageous positions, from which it would be hard

to dislodge them. Besides, it is impossible to secure fresh artillery and cavalry remounts, considering how far we are from headquarters.

“We have, in fact, given ourselves away, and must now face the fact that we cannot hold Verdun, because the country will not supply sufficient forage. We shall have to retreat upon Longwy, and retire to the fortress of Capen, there to watch the course of events. Probably some sort of *accommodement* will be arranged. I think this is likely, because the French are constantly declaring they are not *our* enemies, and only wish to be at war with Austria, of which nation they speak in an insulting manner, but are anxious to be our allies. They spare *us* in every way they can and do us no injury.

“A second campaign is not to be thought of, as every one sees that war is not possible ; it has done no good and has decimated our army through illness, while the horses too are crippled : all this from the want of provisions and the dearth of everything. In fact, the health of the fine troops we brought here is utterly ruined, and they could hardly hold their own against the enemy in the field.

"Spain in the meantime is getting ready, but the French army has advanced into Savoy and has already taken Chambéry. Our army has endured without a murmur, as much as human nature can, of all kinds of hardship, and up to the present we have had only twenty deserters, but our sick list is eight thousand, and there are over one thousand disabled horses. There have also been many deaths among the sick. I hope that our winter quarters will be quiet enough to enable me to return home, which I ardently desire to do, and that by next spring the war will be over. Give my best remembrances to all about you, and with loving farewell,

"C. A. H. SA."<sup>1</sup>

"I have sent Goethe to Longwy. During the last nine days he has had to do without his 'equipment,' and has had no bed to sleep in."

Karl August saw clearly that the campaign was doomed, and that nothing but disaster could result from this organised effort. He longed to be back in Weimar, instead of following this wild-goose expedition to Paris. Still, like a true soldier, he set his whole mind on doing the best

<sup>1</sup> Carl August Herzog.

possible under adverse circumstances. Prince Constantine, on the other hand, was fretting and fuming at his enforced absence from the scene of action. He wrote to his mother from Querfurth, on December 3rd, 1792, of his desire to join the Prussian Army.

"I hope soon to have the good fortune to quit this quiet corner of Saxony, where one can only watch the great struggle going on through a telescope."

In a short time this good fortune came to Constantine. He took part in the siege of Metz, at a time when certain diplomatic transactions were causing considerable excitement. These negotiations ended in the different members of the German Confederation or Reich, agreeing to join the emperor in the war against France. Goethe, who from the beginning of the struggle had accompanied the duke in his self-sacrificing efforts in the cause of the empire against France, found himself in a by no means unpleasant position. So far he had nothing to complain of, and was content. While the army invested Metz he corrected his "*Reineke Fuchs*," composed short essays and poems, and lived as pleasantly as

he could amongst the Rhine students. He sent pleasant accounts of his military experiences to Herder, while Karl August, who was deeply impressed by the lamentable issue of this deplorable war, wrote in very different terms :

“How differently people judge, who are not eye-witnesses of this misery ! A sort of stupor has come over me ; ‘my mind seems to be standing still.’ I am incapable of forming a clear judgment as to whether our part in this deplorable mess is for good or evil.”

While this condition of affairs prevailed in the political world, a sudden and terrible affliction fell upon Anna Amalia, whose maternal heart was already wrung by fears concerning the safety of her children. On September 6th Prince Constantine died. The cause of his death was mysterious. It was given out as being due to typhus fever, then prevalent in the camp at Metz, but there were whispers of a quarrel and a duel. All through his life the prince had been a cause of anxiety to his family, especially to his mother, his strong will, which was allied to a weak constitution, not making a harmonious combination.

Some of his escapades have already been men-

tioned, but of late years he had grown wiser, and it was hoped had sown his last crop of wild oats. In any case, mothers are proverbially most attached to the child who gives the most trouble, and Anna Amalia had undoubtedly a weakness for *son petit Constantin*. In any case, now that the grave had closed over his faults, they received that condonation generally extended to the failings of the dead. "He was a good fellow," every one said, "and his own worst enemy," etc., etc. We all know the stock observations made on such occasions.

Meanwhile Karl August, whose heart was undoubtedly in the right place, was deeply concerned for his mother, who he knew would mourn her "scapegrace." He wrote to the Duchess Louise, asking her to break the news as gently as possible, and for some days could not find courage to write to his mother about their "common loss." One cannot but admire the great tenderness with which he expresses himself.

"I am expecting with the greatest anxiety news of your health, which I am afraid has suffered from this sudden blow. I wrote to my wife to break it to you. God grant it may have no bad effect. I trust all my friends are doing their



utmost to help you to support this trial. Every one here has the greatest sympathy for us in our affliction. Your brother, who desires to be remembered to you, was much shocked at the melancholy accident ; the accompanying letter from the king shows how much his majesty feels our loss. May your guardian angel, and the Consoler of all who suffer, strengthen and comfort you. This is my sincerest wish and hope. Here everything remains as it was. I am 'on leave' with the Duke of Brunswick, for there was nothing to do where I was, nothing to see and nothing to hear ; and even here, with the exception of the society of the duke, your brother, everything is quiet enough. I have written to-day to Goethe to tell him *the details* of our misfortune.<sup>1</sup> I am in good health. Think of me and try to find consolation with those who are devoted to you."

"K. A."

Anna Amalia was guided by her son's advice, and, for the rest, she was of too strong—I would almost say too masculine—a character to abandon herself to undue grief, or what are called womanish

<sup>1</sup> The word "details," as well as the previous expression, "accident," tends to confirm the report as to the duel.

tears. After the first shock she exhibited much fortitude and resignation, which is shown in her letter to her favourite brother, Frederick Augustus.

"TIEFURT,

"*September 15th, '93.*

"You have a good heart, dear Fritz, and I know you feel for a mother's grief, who has suddenly been plunged into terrible sorrow. You will sympathise with me, for oh! I have now only *one son*, and every day I fear to hear bad news of him. God grant that I may be spared this. I pray Him to lead Karl's heart in the ways of peace, so that he can without dishonour follow thy example. This is now my only desire on earth."

Karl August's wishes corresponded with those of the Duchess Amalia, in so far as he wished to return to his duchy, where his presence had become most necessary after an absence of eighteen months. He asked the King of Prussia for a furlough of twelve weeks, which was granted. The joy of this meeting softened the bitter grief of the mother's heart, since she must have felt that, while Providence left her one child, she dared not venture to question the dispensation which had afflicted her. As a proof of her determination to conquer her own feelings,

she went to console her faithful Einsiedel for the death of his uncle, and while she was in Jena she put off her departure for two days in order to be present at a comedy which the students had got up for her amusement. Her son had then been only four weeks dead.

The duchess in her hour of sorrow experienced the truth of the saying: "As you sow you shall reap." Those who are hard to others seldom meet with much sympathy when their own turn comes. Anna Amalia was to reap a rich harvest from good deeds she had sown; not alone her faithful attendants, but every one in Weimar, tried to show sympathy as they best could, in the sorrow which had fallen on their loved princess. Goethe tells Jacobi: "Being somewhat of a help in the hour of need, I have done much to distract the stricken duchess." Her faithful old Wieland was unremitting in his efforts to turn the direction of Anna Amalia's thoughts, while Thusnelda was, like a second self, feeling the sorrow as if it were her very own.

These are all testimonies to the love which Anna Amalia's constant kindness had inspired in those who had received benefits at her hands. This

tenderness for her sorrow, joined to the ever efficacious effect of time in healing the wounds of the heart, by degrees softened the first bitterness of Amalia's grief. She resumed her favourite occupations, although, as was only natural, she was no longer the pivot upon which all literary movement turned. Still, her sympathy for all endeavours made in the field of poetry, philosophy, or literature was as keen as ever ; she took the most intelligent interest in all that was going on, saw with pleasure the growing friendship between Goethe and Schiller, while, on the other side, Herder and Wieland drew closer together. That friction of any kind was now totally absent from the court circle of celebrated men was due in a great measure to the gentle influence of the dowager duchess, which she exercised in an unmistakable manner over Herder, Wieland, and Goethe.

After Constantine's death Anna Amalia resided altogether at Tiefurt, rarely coming to the Witthumshaus. So far back as 1782 she had placed in the grounds of Tiefurt the busts of three of her favourite poets, with inscriptions written for her by Villoison.

She now wished to erect a tablet to those who

were no longer amongst the living and to Prince Constantine first of all. She writes to Knebel July 1796: "I received the enclosed yesterday, but too late to thank you, which I do now with most grateful feelings. I would like the first line, namely: 'In the vale where thou the early spring didst enjoy' to be set up. According to my feelings for those who are dead and those who are left behind, the simpler it is the better. Without first consulting Goethe, who does not seem to wish to have anything to do with such things, I beg of you to have it engraved in large letters on the monument. There must be no mistakes, for that is very objectionable, so will you see to this before you give it to the stonemason to cut on the tablet."

In 1798 the circle at Weimar received an agreeable addition in Jean Paul Richter, better known in those days by the name of "Hesperus," which he had adopted as a pseudonym. He was altogether different from the men of genius hitherto congregated in the modern Athens, who had passed from manhood to old age in these Attic shades, and who undoubtedly (probably from the narrow sphere in which they lived) possessed a wonderfully

high opinion of themselves. Jean Paul had, however, no reason to complain of his reception. Herder, especially, was much drawn to him; so, too, Anna Amalia, who was charmed with the simplicity, naïveté, and singularity, which characterised the stranger. We find Herder writing in his usually flowery manner, that Heaven had sent him a treasure, "which I dare not hope to keep." As it turned out, he did preserve his treasure, and had the happiness of seeing Jean Paul daily for some years.

Goethe received the newcomer politely, but without any absurd demonstrativeness. Meantime, Jean Paul wrote to his friend Otto: "It was with apprehension amounting almost to terror that I entered the abode of Goethe. Every one in Weimar depicted him as cold and indifferent to all earthly things. Madame von Kalb told me he no longer admired anything, not even his own works. Every word, she said, 'that drops from his lips is an icicle, especially to strangers, whom he is with difficulty persuaded to admit to his presence.' His house impressed me; it is the only one in Weimar built in the Italian style. From the very staircase it is a museum of statues

and pictures. . . . The god at length appeared ; he was cold, expressed himself only in monosyllables, and without the slightest emphasis.

“ ‘ Tell him,’ said Knebel, ‘ that the French have just entered Rome.’ ‘ Hum ! ’ replied the god. In person he is bony, his physiognomy full of fire, his look a sun. At length our conversation on the arts and on the opinion of the public, perhaps also the champagne, animated him, and then at length I felt I *was* with Goethe. His language is not flowery or brilliant, like that of Herder ; it is incisive, calm and resolute. He concluded by reading, or rather I should say acting, one of his own unpublished poems, a composition truly sublime.”

After this, the flames of his heart pierced the crust of ice ; he pressed the hand of Jean Paul, who, in his enthusiasm exclaims : “ No, there is nobody like Goethe ! We must be friends.”

This expectation, as readers of Jean Paul are aware, was not realised ; the two men were diametrically opposed on every point. Goethe wrote to Schiller his opinion, that “ Richter’s love of truth and wish for self-improvement have impressed me in his favour, but the social man is

a sort of theoretical man, and I doubt if he will approach us in a practical manner." Schiller's opinion of Richter is not given, but Richter thought Schiller "stony." Jean Paul stayed in Weimar three years, living in a very retired manner, much occupied with his studies and not mixing much with his literary *confrères*. He often came to the Duchess Amalia, who had a warm liking for this interesting and retiring man. Here is a prettily worded letter of thanks for some flowers sent to him by Anna Amalia :

" *March 20th, 1800.*

"The lovely roses your highness presented to me were as delightful as an evening spent with the giver, only more surprising. . . . I cannot give expression to my thanks, or to my pleasure. I trust that the flowers of poetry, I hope shortly to lay at your Highness's feet, may give you a tithe of the pleasure that I have felt in contemplating these children of the past summer, and which they will continue to give me while they last."

Anna Amalia, who had not lost her elegant gift for letter-writing, answers :

"Friendship often attaches more value to the



gift of a friend than it deserves. You, dear Herr Richter, have woven a charming wreath out of the few flowers I sent you. They had no other value than that they expressed my estimation of the virtue and talents for which you are distinguished, and the esteem with which I am

“Always your friend,

“AMALIA.”

## CHAPTER VIII

**I**T is not always the case that age softens instead of hardening the character, which, as we often see, grows peevish and fractious under the burden of added years and increasing infirmity. With Anna Amalia there was no sign of this disagreeable metamorphosis. On the contrary, as years advanced, her heart seemed to be purified; her self-love decreased, her affectionate care for others increased; her thoughts centred on her old friends, and her desire was to make every one round her happy. With such a nature the approach of that dread enemy, old age brings no fears in its train, and even death itself has no terrors.

The duchess took great interest in Knebel's marriage with one of her favourites, the charming singer, Louise von Rüdorf, whose name has been before mentioned. This marriage, which took place in 1798, did not promise to turn out a happy one. Fräulein Rüdorf, or Rüdchen, which was the

duchess's pet name for the bride, was still a young woman, although no longer in her first youth, while Knebel, as we know, was a well-seasoned old bachelor, who had made love to half Weimar, including Emily Gore and Fräulein Göchhausen. The happiness of such a marriage was indeed doubtful, and Anna Amalia, who took a great interest in both parties and especially in Rüdélchen, had grave misgivings.

A wedding, however, appeals to every one, and Anna Amalia and the court generally were stirred by this event. The wedding breakfast was given by the duchess, and the happy pair retired to Ilmenau, where Knebel's sister, who was *gouvernante* to the Princess Caroline, lived. Both Knebel and this sister of his, who figures largely in his cumbersome volume of recollections, were a pair of nervous, irritable creatures, without any backbone; always grumbling, self-upbraiding, and weakly whining over their ill-luck in being poor, and consequently not considered as they felt they deserved to be.

As a rule, everything goes wrong with persons of this infirm character, and we are not surprised that all the ills of Job fell upon Knebel, who could

neither persuade Karl August nor Prince Constantine to provide for him, or induce his father to give him money, or even take proper care of his brother Max, who, being a lunatic, eventually committed suicide. The marriage with Rüdélchen was another mistake, one which Anna Amalia with her knowledge of life felt certain would be far from happy.

A few months later, in October 1798, we find the duchess writing to the bride, evidently in answer to her complaints of her husband's conduct.

"It is his vanity which makes him do such foolish things, and you must consult a medical man of the place in regard to what you have noticed, and tell him to pay attention to these symptoms, especially if he is more violent at the change of the moon : perhaps he cannot help it."

Again, on April 29th, 1799, the duchess writes to her favourite :

"Thank you, dear Rüdélchen, for the beautiful roses ; they gave me increased pleasure from your saying you had gathered them yourself. I lose no time in telling you the pleasure they give me. It surprises me that any one can remain in Ilmenau in this weather. About my music, I think it will be very good."

This remark referred to the duchess's "Thoughts on Music," a little volume she had put together, and of which Herder writes, June 1799, that it had filled him with sweet harmonious thoughts, and that he closed the book with a musical chord sounding in his ear. Also Kapellmeister Krantz, so closely associated with the amateur theatre, is full of praise of this later composition of the duchess's, and Anna Amalia's kind heart being responsive to old memories, she exerted her influence and, through Haydn, got Krantz a good appointment at Stuttgart. "But now all is over with my music," says kind-hearted Anna Amalia.

On February 16th, 1801, Anna Amalia's mother, Phillipina Charlotte, Duchess of Brunswick, died. We know her well, through the sparkling pages written by her sister Wilhelmina, mentioned already, who married the Markgraf of Bayreuth. Both Wilhelmina and Phillipina Charlotte were sisters to Frederick the Great. A more detestable character than this same Duchess of Brunswick did not exist. She cared for none of her children, and she especially disliked Anna Amalia,<sup>1</sup> because she had wished for a prince instead of a princess.

<sup>1</sup> See Vol. I.

In her will she gave full effect to her dislike, leaving Anna Amalia but a trifling legacy, while the largest share of her property was bequeathed to Augusta Dorothea, abbess of Gandersheim. The closing words of her will were an entreaty that there should be no dispute over it, but that each one should take the share left him or her with a good grace. Anna Amalia followed this injunction, and although she was the eldest daughter, she submitted to the injustice which her mother had always shown her, and continued to show, even on her deathbed.

Death seemed now to be continually knocking at Amalia's door. In her circle of friends the gaps were frequent. At the end of this year 1801 Wieland lost his excellent wife, and the duchess grieved for the sorrow that had fallen on her old friend. She wished, so soon as the weather grew milder, that he should come and stay with her at Tiefurt. No one knew better than the duchess how to console those who were in sorrow, and we find Wieland writing, in June 1802: "Since the beginning of this month I am with our good duchess at that Elysium, Tiefurt, where (for a person in her station) she shows me the most

unexampled tenderness, attention, esteem, and friendship, does everything that is possible to cheer and comfort me, and to make me forget that my Alceste has left me for ever. I try to seem content and happy, but it is only seeming. I cannot *forget* ; but to please this best of princesses I do my best, and also to please her I try to work, of course with many interruptions and very slowly. In the morning I continue my translation of 'Euripides.' "

Wieland now sold his little property at Ostmannstadt, where he had buried his Alceste, and had arranged when his time came to be buried with her. This done, he settled himself permanently in his house in Weimar, which is still pointed out to strangers as the "house where Wieland lived." It was close to Anna Amalia's garden which occupied the large space now covered by Schiller's Strasse. It was a beautiful garden of large extent, laid out with the straight walks and beds of flowers then in fashion. There was ornamental water, fine shady trees, etc. To this enchanted garden Wieland begged he might have a key ; he was sure his honoured princess would allow an old man, on the brink of the grave and

broken down with grief, this privilege. And kind-hearted Amalia agreed, although it may be well imagined it was not quite agreeable to her to give him this right of way.<sup>1</sup>

Still the death-roll goes on, recalling to recollection the wonderful tale written by Doctor Johnson, wherein one Mirza saw as in a vision a large concourse of people passing across a broad ditch; occasionally one dropped in, but the rest were in such a hurry, they took no heed; and so it went on till none were left. It is so every day in this great city of London, and so it was in the little city of Weimar. The next victim was Herder, who died in December 1803. He was not yet sixty. Light, Love, Life, were the three stars of his existence. His death caused deep sorrow, not alone in the court circle and amongst his friends, but amongst the poor, who loved to hear those simple sermons of his, delivered with wonderful eloquence, that had gained for him a reputation

<sup>1</sup> Wieland presents a much more amiable, although perhaps not quite so lofty and high-minded, a personality as Herder. Under other circumstances he might have developed into a greater writer. He wrote much, and his teaching is not edifying; but if his works did harm in the time he lived, they are now altogether forgotten, "Oberon" being the only one which has kept its place.



which equalled, although from a different standpoint, his extraordinary erudition and poetical gifts.

Few men possessed greater virtues than Herder, or more lofty aspirations. Unfortunately, his uncertain temper and morbidly sensitive nature made him, if not ill to live with (like Carlyle, whose self-appreciation was much in advance of Herder's), at any rate difficult to manage at times. To be perpetually taking offence where none is intended, or twisting an innocent observation into an intentional insult is a decidedly unpleasant form of genius. Some one said Herder was like an instrument of exquisite tone, in which, by some fault of mechanism, a slight but oft-recurring jar mars the delicious harmony. Excuse, however, should be made for his ill-health, and his position, which was never exactly what he rightly thought his merits deserved. His gifts were above the common, and although he could not be said to be a poet of a high order, yet every line he wrote was instinct with a pure and noble spirit. "He was inspired," says one of his warmest admirers, "by something nobler than love of fame, by a sincere and constant desire to promote the best and highest interests of humanity."

A month later, January 1804, the Duchess Amalia writes to Frau Knebel :

“ I thank you, dear Rüdél, for your good wishes on my birthday, which in truth I need sorely, for my heart is oppressed by the loss we have sustained in Herder's death. In consequence we have had a sad New Year. For my part, his loss is so great that I cannot speak much of it ; he is mourned by everybody in all stations in life. I can well believe that your husband's first thought would be to honour the memory of the friend he has lost, by writing a tribute to the nobility of his character and the high aim he had in life. No one could fulfil such a task better than Knebel, and I trust he will lose no time in putting his purpose into effect. To add to my present distress of mind, the Landgräfin of Homburg has arrived, on her way to Berlin, whither she is taking her daughter. This obliges me to show a smiling face. Madame de Stael, who has been here for the last fortnight, wins universal approbation. She unites pleasant manners with an extraordinary understanding and brilliant wit. She is much with me. Your husband would like her.

“ AMALIA.”

The duchess all through her life showed a wonderful power of throwing off sadness. This was not due to any lack of feeling, but rather to the singular activity of her mind. In a few days we find her quite cheerful. She writes to Knebel :

“Why don't you come to us? We have a veritable phenomenon in the form of Madame de Stael. You *should* know her, you would be charmed with her. She is so agreeable, without egotism or any ridiculous pretension. She knows what to admire and whom to esteem. One must *know* her to have a proper appreciation of her.”

Evidently Herder was forgotten!

Madame de Stael came to Weimar as a result of her banishment from France by Napoleon, the banishment being the consequence of one of her witty *bon mots* anent the dictator. She was then planning her great work “L'Allemagne,” and by the advice of Benjamin Constant, who accompanied her, came to gather knowledge of her subject in the German Athens. Some writers tell us she made enemies in Weimar by her sarcasms and her loud manner of talking down every one, man or woman. Heine said she was a whirlwind in

petticoats, and some one else that she was the Sultana of the mind.

Goethe and Schiller, whom she stormed with "cannonades of talk," were full of admiration for her extraordinary intellect. Schiller describes her as "the most talkative, the most combative, the most gesticulative of women," but she was also "the most cultivated and the most gifted." The account of her interview with Goethe is most diverting but too long to give here. She frankly told him she meant to print his conversation which naturally had the effect of shutting him up. Nevertheless, she said he was "*un homme d'un esprit prodigieux en conversation.*"

It was an immense relief to Schiller and Goethe when she left Weimar, where her tongue had made her many enemies, but certainly a friend in Anna Amalia, who admired her vivacity, and cleverness, and saw no harm in her. Their friendship was continued in a correspondence. Nevertheless, in spite of her friendship, Amalia must have distrusted her distinguished correspondent, since her letters were always drafted by Wieland, so that no slips might be made for Madame de Stael to lay hold of.

Anna Amalia's correspondence continued to be the business of her life; she answered all letters punctually, and very rarely devolved the task on others. Amongst her correspondents were men and women of all shades of politics—infidels, excellent Christians, together with men and women distinguished in every branch of literature and art. Merck, with whom she had (as the reader knows) a constant interchange of letters, suffered in later years from mental affliction. The young sculptor, Alexander Trippel, the creator of the fine busts of Goethe and Herder, to be seen in the grand-ducal library in Weimar, was amongst her later correspondents. The young artist understood the use of the chisel better than that of the pen, his letters being an extraordinary jumble.

On one occasion he writes to tell the duchess that the busts of Herr Baron von Goeden (Goethe) and Consistorial Rath Herder have been packed and delivered to Herr Reiffenstein. He winds up with remembrances to the Kammerherr Einsiedel and Kammerfrau Göchhausen. Such a breach of etiquette was enough to make the hair stand erect on the heads of the personages named, who had spent their lives in the shadow of the court, and



GOETHE.

*From the bust by Trippel in the Grand Ducal Library.*



were as thoroughly well trained as two *chevaux de parade*.

Another correspondence of interest was that which passed between Anna Amalia with the Empress of Russia. It owed its origin to the marriage of her grandson, the Crown Prince Carl Friedrich, with the Grand Duchess Maria Paulovna,<sup>1</sup> sister to Alexander, Czar of Russia, which took place at St. Petersburg on August 3rd, 1804. The sweet disposition of the young princess and her devotion to Anna Amalia were the consolation of the duchess's old age. Her letters to the empress are full of her love for the young Maria Paulovna.

"I find it difficult to express in words," she writes to the empress, "the happiness I feel at the marriage of my grandson with the Grand Duchess Maria. I should be very wanting in proper feeling, if I did not recognise the boon which your Majesty has conferred on us, in giving us a princess who has added so much happiness to our family life. Her fine character, her amiable qualities have won my heart, and my attachment to her will last my life."

Anna Amalia then thanks the empress for confer-

<sup>1</sup> Maria Paulovna was niece to the Duchess Louise.



ring on her the Order of St. Catherine. All her letters to the empress are in the same tone of loving affection for the young duchess, who seems to have had on her side the most tender affection for her husband's grandmother.

Fraulein Göchhausen, writing to Professor Böttiger, tells him: "Our dear duchess lives only for and in her grandchildren, who both love her most tenderly and as much as they do their own parents. They are on the most unconstrained and confidential footing with our duchess, to whose life the young duchess especially has given a new happiness. Generally twice in the week she sends her grandmother a little note: 'Dear grandmamma, If you will allow us, my husband and I are coming this evening to sup with you.'" Then, like an old pair who have been comfortably married for years, they come in arm-in-arm and make themselves quite at home. Occasionally they bring two attendants. By a thousand pretty ways they make the evening pass delightfully."

Anna Amalia was indeed charmed with Maria Paulovna, of whom she tells Knebel she cannot say enough, only that she is a treasure and that she loves her with all her heart. These praises

were not exaggerated, the young bride justifying in her later years all that was said of her. She was like the woman in the Canticle, a pearl beyond price, who in the days of trouble that were to come was the stay and comfort of all about her.

The spring was now at hand. On April 27th Anna Amalia writes to Goethe, thanking him for a poem or book he had sent her, with apparently a dedication in her praise, for she says he is too flattering ; also she is grateful for his kind hope that she may live long enough to see the results of the creative genius of the newly born century, and these good wishes she returns with the prayer that the Parcae may not interfere with the duration of his or her life, as she does not want an interference from "mythological phantoms."

The arrival of her favourite brother, Frederick Augustus, who all through his life had been devoted to her, gave a pleasant turn to her thoughts, especially as the prince had elected to make Weimar his home. Alas ! this reunion of the brother and sister lasted only a few weeks. He had not completed the purchase of his future dwelling when, after a short illness, he died, on October 8th, 1805.

"The stern finger of fate," writes Anna Amalia to Hofrath Böttiger, "took him from us. I had only enjoyed the presence of my beloved brother, from whom I had been separated for fourteen years, for a few days, when that Higher Power, to Which we must submit, saw fit to take him from me. The many similar trials I have experienced made me feel this hard stroke of fate so deeply, that I cannot on this occasion say any more. I know that you, like all the good men who knew and appreciated my dear brother, will feel grieved at this sad loss, and this thought lightens my sorrow somewhat, and I trust will give me strength to bear it with patience and submission."

There is a sad yet resigned tone in this letter, which is touching. And now the duchess, looking round her and seeing, as all do who advance in life, the many blanks where once there were loving faces, began to think that her own time was near at hand. Still she was not selfishly taken up either with grief for her own sorrows, or dread of the "king on the white horse," who was now approaching. She still took interest in all those about her. Her letters show the keenest sympathy with the advance in science and modern discoveries, and she

listened for hours to the reading of works on such subjects.

Kapellmeister Hummel, from Stuttgart, was invited to Tiefurt, and there was much music ; but it was only a semblance of mirth, without any foundation in fact. Goethe remarked : " It is in these moments that it is brought home to one clearly that all amusements and studies, as well as eating, drinking, sleeping, are mere matters of routine, which follow one another in gloomy succession."

But now it would seem that deeper shadows were to darken the closing years of Anna Amalia. Once more France was causing alarm throughout Europe. The masterful genius of Napoleon recognised the necessity of employing the immense army at his command in destroying other countries, while his own greed of power saw therein a means of exalting himself still higher. The war that had broken out between Prussia and France involved the little duchy of Weimar. Karl August's ally at once requisitioned a certain contingent of men to be supplied by the duchy, while Karl August himself was placed in command of the Prussian advance guard, and had to repair instantly to the seat of war.

"Negotiations for peace are going on," writes Anna Amalia to Knebel, on October 20th, 1806.

"As a matter of fact the French have got all they want, and it is only Buonaparte, who cannot restrain his arrogance or bridle his foolish pride, who insists upon letting matters take their course and see what the issue will be."

Nevertheless, Anna Amalia saw clearly that the prospect was a gloomy one for Weimar. The poor little duchy must serve as a shuttlecock to those belligerent powers. "She has so little strength in herself to resist the powerful demons, who threaten all Europe with fire and sword. There is no longer peace and good will amongst the nations of the earth. This blessed condition only exists in small circles or between friend and friend."

From this time the duchess appears to have lost all heart and to have shared the general feeling of hopelessness as to the future of Germany. Still she keeps up her correspondence with her friends. In November 1806 she tells Frau von Knebel that "the Emperor of Austria is hourly expected, and we do not know how long he will stay. Prussians, Russians, English, and Swedish troops are pouring into Hanover ; the French are retiring before them.

Perhaps Mahometans will likewise come to the assistance of Germany."

And again in December she writes :

"Rüdelchen, you are quite wrong in supposing that, because I have not acknowledged your last two letters, I am vexed with you. Truly I am sometimes not able to write, and at this moment my mind is not in the vein. My soul is troubled by the present unhappy condition of the land in which we are living, which cannot be changed, and must be borne with resignation and courage. These we must seek where alone they can be found, and this is the only hope left to us."

But even in this sad condition the duchess did not lose her interest in the progress of science. In the beginning of 1806 Gall came to Jena to propagate his system of phrenology. Goethe, who attended all his lectures, embraced the new doctrines with enthusiasm, although he was so ill that Gall visited him in his sick room, and there performed divers brain dissections, which made Goethe a convert to the new theories. Anna Amalia followed these new developments with interest, and accepted the office of joint president with Goethe of the Society of Natural Science. But this brief lull was

speedily disturbed by the approach of Napoleon's army.

"We are tossed here and there," writes Anna Amalia to Knebel, "like a ship upon the ocean. The Crown Princess is all ready to start for Dresden at the first approach of the French."

A few days later Maria Paulovna left Weimar, and travelled to the north by the wish of her brother, the Czar. Karl August was far away serving with his regiment, and unconscious of the danger threatening his duchy by the approach of the French army, which was opposed by some Prussians, who had been hurriedly sent to the help of Weimar. Their resplendent uniforms cheered the frightened inhabitants, but they were a mere handful as compared with Napoleon's army.

"On October 14th, at seven o'clock in the morning, the thunder of distant artillery alarmed the inhabitants of Weimar. The battle of Jena had begun. Goethe heard the cannon with terrible distinctness, but as it slackened towards noon he sat down to dinner as usual. Scarcely had he begun the meal when the cannon burst out in close proximity to the town. Immediately the table was cleared. Riemer found Goethe walking



THE DUCHESS LOUISE OF SAXE-WEIMAR AND EISENACH, BECAME GRAND DUCHESS 1814, AT WHICH PERIOD THIS PORTRAIT REPRESENTS HER.





up and down the garden, the balls whirled over the house, the bayonets of the Prussians in flight gleamed over the garden wall. . . . It was a fine bright day, the birds were singing sweetly on the esplanade, and the deep repose of Nature formed an awful contrast to the violence of war."

What strikes one in this realistic description is the indifference shown by Goethe for the safety of the royal family in the Residenz, and Anna Amalia close by in the *Witthumshaus*. There can be little doubt from all contemporary evidence that Goethe was not a man of war, but, conceding this point, one has to go farther, and with regret conclude that his fears for his personal safety kept him from flying to the assistance of "angel Louise."

Fortunately the duchess Louise had a brave spirit, and in this emergency displayed extraordinary courage and presence of mind. She at once took her place as director of the movements of the the royal party. The grey-haired Duchess Amalia and Princess Caroline were her first thought. She had some difficulty in persuading Amalia to fly, however ; but at last she consented to do so.

"We left Weimar in the midst of the thunder,

which followed us on our road to Erfurt," writes Fräulein von Göchhausen, "the sky was lit up with the glare of the cannonade. The streets were full of the baggage-waggons of the retreating garrison. The sound of the cannons grew more distant as we drew closer to Erfurt, the road was less crowded by the fugitives. We had been scarcely two hours in Erfurt when the news came, that the enemy was only a few miles distant. Our flight, accompanied by the cavalry, the wounded, and nearly all the inhabitants, was something beyond description. Amidst horrors too terrible to relate we made our way by Langensalz and Mülhausen to Heiligenstadt, where General von Pfül had nothing cheering to tell us. On the 16th we arrived in Göttingen. Here we found letters which instructed us to proceed on the third day to Cassel, where we enjoyed perfect tranquillity, and saw neither friend nor foe. The longing for news of Weimar was indescribable, and on the next day, when we arrived in Eisenach, the good people there would not let the duchess go. She appeared to them as a guardian angel; she helped them in so many ways. At last on the 30th we got back to Weimar. We found a miserable state of things,



KARL AUGUST, GRAND DUKE OF SAXE-WEIMAR-EISENACH, IN THE  
PARK OF WEIMAR.

*He was created Grand Duke 1814, and died suddenly 1828.*



but we have to thank our good duchess that it was not infinitely worse."

This allusion refers to the Duchess Louise, whose courage in withstanding Napoleon is one of the most romantic episodes of this terrible war. At the risk of repeating what probably is known to most readers of history, I give the incident.

Weimar had been entered by Napoleon's army ; a young officer came to Goethe to assure him his house would be secure from pillage, as it had been selected for the headquarters of Marshal Augereau. In spite of this, several troopers made themselves at home in the Goethehaus, broke open the cellars and got royally drunk. In the night there was a tumult outside, and Goethe had to admit a troop of drunken soldiers. Meantime the marshal had not arrived and the pillage went on ; houses were in flames, even the Residenz was threatened. At this juncture Napoleon entered the town, and took up his quarters at the Residenz Schloss, where the Duchess Louise had remained with only two or three faithful attendants. Not even the arrival of Napoleon daunted her ; her place, she said, was amongst the people whom she

had always loved ; it was her duty to stand by them at whatever cost to herself.

And so far she judged rightly. When the people learnt that the grand duchess was still in the castle, their joy knew no bounds. When they met they threw themselves into one another's arms exclaiming :

“The duchess is here !”

Nor were they wrong in feeling that her presence was a protection to them, for so it proved. When, on the evening of October 15th, Napoleon arrived at the castle, where rooms had been prepared for him and his attendants, the Duchess Louise descended the grand staircase to meet him. Pale, but with a calm air of resignation and dignity, she awaited the approach of the “Emperor,” on whom everything—the fate of the people and her own—depended. Napoleon regarded her with hostility and in a loud angry voice enquired :

“Who are you, madam ?”

“The Duchess of Weimar !” was the quiet reply.

“I am sorry for you, madam,” said Napoleon, “but I must crush your husband.” Then, turning abruptly away, he called out rudely : “Let dinner be got ready for me in my own apartments.”

Louise was not daunted ; she retired at once,

but it was a case of *reculer pour mieux sauter*. Next morning she sent to demand an interview. The request was granted.

Night had brought counsel, and Napoleon, refreshed by sleep and an excellent breakfast, was in better humour. He paid courteous attention to the appeal of this dignified and still beautiful woman, who pleaded her husband's and her country's cause with a boldness and tact which extorted the admiration of her listener. At first, indeed, his face darkened and his heavy brows contracted. Still, the duchess, unmoved by these ominous signs, continued. She defended, with the eloquence of a noble nature, the conduct of the duke, her husband, in his adherence to the Prussian King, whose personal friend he was, and from whom he had received many testimonies of esteem. With a lofty air she enquired how, in the hour of peril and misfortune, he could desert his friend and ally. She then turned her beautiful eyes upon her listener, and with a tinge of colour in her pale face asked him would not his fame be for ever tarnished, if he gave over (as he threatened to do) Weimar and its inhabitants to his lawless troops? And, wonderful to say, Napoleon relented, and not



only gave orders that the town should be respected, but rescinded his repeated declarations that Karl August should never set foot again in his own duchy. The conditions which he made were, however, rigorous. Karl August was to quit the Prussian camp in twenty-four hours. Louise, uncertain whether she could prevail on the duke to submit, begged and pleaded for a little more time. Napoleon was inflexible; he had yielded more to this high-minded princess than he had ever intended, but there was to be no further concession; so the duchess hastened away to despatch messengers in all directions to seek the duke, for she did not know the exact place where he was.

Next morning Napoleon waited on the duchess, accompanied by his principal generals and aides-de-camp. His manner was more than courteous, he seemed full of anxiety that the duchess should acquit him of any complicity in the excesses which had been committed by his soldiers on their first entrance into the town. He also assured her that the war was none of his making, and "that it had been forced upon him." "Believe me, madam," he said, "all things are ordained by Providence, and I am now only an instrument to carry out

its decrees." As he descended the staircase after this interview, he said, in a tone of enthusiasm : "There is a woman whom even our two hundred cannon could not frighten !"

It is not expressly stated, but no doubt it was in consequence of this visit that Napoleon extended the time he had originally fixed for Karl August's return to Weimar, and made other modifications in the severe conditions he had at first imposed. No entreaties or remonstrances, however, would induce him to abate the fine or contribution he demanded of 200,000,000 francs, a terrible tax on the already over-burthened duchy. All the Duchess Louise could do she did to alleviate the sufferings of the people. Her private purse was drained for them, her jewels were sold for their relief. One is rejoiced to hear that she had her reward in the adoration of her people, in the increasing affection of her husband, and the admiration of all Europe. "She is the true model of a woman," writes Madame de Stäel, "formed by nature to adorn the very highest position. She is equally devoid of pretension and weakness."

The meeting between the two duchesses on Anna Amalia's return was very affectionate. Both had

passed through a crisis, sufficient to make them bury all remembrance of former differences. The condition of the town was pitiable, and the distress of the people heartrending. Wonderful to relate, the Witthumshaus had escaped the general pillage. "Whether I owe this blessing to the honesty of some French hussars, to the protection of a French adjutant, or to the intervention of some higher Power, I am indeed grateful for being spared the grief of having my house plundered."

A few days later Anna Amalia received by courier the news of a calamity, which was another result of this disastrous war. Her brother, the reigning Duke of Brunswick, had in the battle of October 14th received a severe wound in the head; his life was saved, but the ball had struck his right eye, and he altogether lost the sight of it. The other eye was also threatened, and the surgeons did not give any certain hope of saving it.

Also Karl Ferdinand of Brunswick, who had fought in the Seven Years' War, was driven out of Hamburg by Davoust, and died of his wounds on November 10th. Misery and grief reigned all over Germany.

"Fate seems to pursue us mortals with grief," writes Knebel to his beloved duchess. "Life and



GOETHE, 1802.

*After the Portrait by Kalb.*



death seem to be playing a game and the outcome lies in One All-powerful Hand. It is quite true that two hundred French soldiers have died of their wounds. Bonaparte should bring back *their bones* with his other relics." And then he asks the question which must have occurred to many minds: "How is it that Frederick the Great has been so soon forgotten, and that not even a trace of his glorious existence remains? Perhaps he neglected to form the nation upon his own pattern; or was it that he tried and failed?"

In Goethe, Anna Amalia met with a bitter disappointment. In place of being a support in these days of trouble he retired into himself,<sup>1</sup> and acted as if the great drama of this cruel war was being played before him, without his having any personal interest in the matter. The duchess complained of this attitude of his, this effort to free himself personally from any participation in the events that were passing before the eyes of all the world. It is well known, however, that it was Goethe's

<sup>1</sup> From this time Goethe's character seems to have undergone a complete transformation. All contemporary writers and visitors to Weimar mention his haughty demeanour, amounting to insolence. Crabbe Robinson gives an amusing account of his interview with the great writer.

practice to avoid every painful consideration. He could not bear the thought of death, "the eternal fairy tale," and in his later years never mentioned the word or allowed it to be named in his presence.

The alliance with Prussia had brought Weimar much suffering, especially in 1807. Karl August was now in Berlin, where he in vain tried to win some advantage for his duchy out of the web of political entanglements.

"I do believe it would be easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for us to get anything for Weimar ; but there is this comfort, that in the far-off future the evil, with care, time, and self-sacrifice, will amend. Brighter days will come and a rich harvest will be our reward," writes Karl August to Anna Amalia, who, with the Duchess Louise and her granddaughter, was still in Weimar. Her favourite, the Crown Princess, was with her husband at Warschau, where Karl August presently joined them. There were great hopes that the Emperor Alexander's influence might prove advantageous to Weimar, but the hatred Napoleon entertained for Karl August would not permit him to relax a tittle of the load of taxes he had imposed upon

the little duchy. There was even a fear lest this dislike might lead the conqueror to say : "Let Weimar cease to exist," as he had said in the case of Brunswick.

"One must try and live through these bad times, and exercise patience and firmness, else we may get trampled in the dust," writes Anna Amalia, on February 4th, 1807, to Knebel. "Honesty counts for nothing and eloquence is not listened to. God grant that all hope of keeping Jena is not lost. Hope is all that we have to sustain us. Burn this letter. The Muses here are asleep, I think ; they are not inclined to be friendly, and we are surrounded with so much that is disagreeable that I cannot blame them for not showing us their kindly countenance. Farewell, dear Knebel. Kiss your wife and child for me.

"AMALIE."

This is one of the last letters written by the duchess. Neither is her correspondence of this period written with the care formerly bestowed upon every line she wrote. The handwriting is greatly altered ; there are signs of haste and anxiety, which was only natural, considering all the anxiety, fatigue, and grief the aged duchess



had gone through. The course of the war troubled her tender soul, and, although her means were limited, she strained them to the utmost to relieve the wants of the sick and dying soldiers. At last, peace was concluded with Weimar, in January 1807. Great was the joy that the duchy was not to be severed from the ducal family that had governed it for so many years. But the good news had come too late to revive Anna Amalia ; the sufferings both mental and bodily which she had undergone, the hurried flight from Erfurt to Cassel and thence to Weimar, the horror of the situation, and the separation from her son and the grandchildren she loved so dearly, were too much for her aged frame. She summoned up all her energy to receive Chancellor von Müller, who had returned from his mission to the French camp, and for many hours she conversed with him as to the hopes there were for the future. No one who saw her suspected the end was so near. In the evening she asked for Herder's sermons and read them attentively. When she closed the book she said : "All is well with me. I know I shall soon see Herder and also my brother." A few days later, on April 10th, 1807, she passed

away quietly, her attendant thinking she was asleep. Both body and mind were worn out, and her one sorrow was that her dearly loved son was not with her. By a cruel irony of fate Karl August arrived that same day. He burst into the death chamber. In his wild, passionate way he seized her hand, and finding there was no pulse he rushed out of the room.

A week later the people of Weimar saw their dearly loved duchess for the last time. On April 18th the doors of the Witthums Palace stood open, and through the garden with its sweet scent of early spring flowers came a crowd of weeping women and sorrowful men. Many children, too, were there, for the duchess had always loved the little ones. On they came through the large hall into the room where, on a catafalque, lay Anna Amalia in her coffin, which was draped in violet velvet. Over her shoulders was a violet velvet mantle, and she was clothed in white from head to foot. The coverlet which "good old Oefer" had painted for her was thrown over her feet. The large room was draped with black and behind the deceased were the arms of the two great houses of Brunswick and Weimar, together with the Krautenschild for

Saxony and white rose on a red ground for Burgundy. Anna Amalia's shield was blue, with the letters A.A.

The last resting place of Anna Amalia was in the Metropolitan Church, where Herder is also buried. At the side of the altar, not far from the grave of her brother Frederick Augustus, a small brass tablet has the inscription, "Anna Amalia H.V.S." Some years later a medallion of the duchess was placed on the wall.

Anna Amalia needed no public monument. Her name was enshrined in the hearts of the people who had known her, and amongst whom she had lived, and they handed down their recollections of the good duchess to their children. Further than this no one can expect to be remembered. Nevertheless, I can bear testimony to the fact that although ninety-four years have elapsed since Anna Amalia passed away, her memory is still fresh in the little capital which she loved so well. To the devotion of her grandchildren and the tenderness for her memory which they planted in the mind of Karl Alexander, the late Grand-Duke of Saxe-Weimar, is due the preservation of the Witthüms Palace and all other mementoes connected with the Duchess Anna Amalia of Saxe-Weimar-Eisenach.



INTERIOR OF THE GRAND-DUCAL LIBRARY AT WEIMAR.



## APPENDIX.

### THE GRAND DUCAL LIBRARY AT WEIMAR.

THE grand ducal library dates from the close of the seventeenth century. After the termination of the Thirty Years' War the Dukes of Gotha and Weimar devoted their attention to bind up the wounds, which art and literature had received from the endless wars, that had destroyed all advance in mental culture. It is well known how Ernst, the pious Duke of Gotha, strove to rebuild the schools and restore the colleges, in order that the work of education in the duchy might be resumed.

His grand-nephew was Wilhelm Ernst of Saxe Weimar, who reigned from 1683 to 1728. A scholar and collector of antiquities, books, and rare weapons was Duke Wilhelm, and to his love for such things, as also to his wish to improve the condition of the people, harassed and decimated as they had been by the Thirty Years' War, Weimar owes the foundation of its fine grand ducal library.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I am indebted to my friend, P. von Bojanowski, for permission to make use of his pamphlet on the Grand Ducal Library (published with illustrations, at Weimar) from which these extracts are taken.

A legacy which came to Wilhelm from the last Duke of Saxe Jena in 1690 gave the first promise of this great undertaking. A few years later, in 1701, the library of Chancellor von Lilienheim was purchased, and in 1704 that of Balthazar Friedrich von Logan, the son of a Silesian poet, who had acquired it during his travels round Europe. This fine collection, which was rich in historical works, was put up to auction in Breslau; Duke Ernst bought it for five thousand thalers. He sent Erbach, a *violin player*, to receive the books and bring them to Weimar, the books being conveyed in thirty-seven cases to Halle.

The duke's adviser in such matters was his Privy Councillor von Reinbaden, a learned man, distinguished as a linguist, and an accomplished translator of French and Italian verse. It appears that, through his offices, Konrad Samuel Schurzfleisch was offered the post of librarian in 1706. Schurzfleisch had a high reputation for learning; he was a theologian, jurist, historian, and patriot, the last named being his ruling passion. In his correspondence, which he kept up with the most noted men of his time, this political tendency is exhibited in a marked manner. When, in 1681, Strasburg was taken, he felt more deeply than most of his contemporaries the loss of this bulwark.

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"I cannot restrain my tears," he writes to his friend von Gersdorf, "when I think that, not only the whole of Alsace, but also all north Germany is likewise lost to us." Schurzfleisch was not only a singular personality, but was worthy of taking place as an eminent bibliophile. Both he and his brother, a professor of history in Wittenberg, spent time and money in cultivating the love of books. He died in 1708, and his contemporaries, who lamented their colleague, had two medals struck in the honour of this "living library and walking museum."

He was succeeded in the office of librarian by his brother Heinrich Leonard, who came to Weimar in 1708, with a salary of one hundred thalers (£15), and the title of Director of the Library, also a seat in the Consistorium with a vote as Rath or counsellor. Fourteen waggons, each drawn by four horses, conveyed his modest furniture and his *large library of books*, which were the property of the deceased Schurzfleisch, and which it was understood he had bequeathed to the Weimar Library. Unfortunately, as it sometimes happens, the legacy, if such it was, was not legally secured, and by-and-by Leonard Schurzfleisch, being pressed for money, wished to sell a portion of the books. The duke's lawyers issued a caveat, declaring that when Schurz-



fleisch was appointed librarian it was understood that after his death the books were to belong to the library of Weimar. Leonard, dying before the law proceedings were finally concluded, his heir acknowledged the justice of the claim (although he had received an offer from a bookseller of ten thousand thalers for the collection), and so the victory was with Weimar. Meantime the books remained where Leonard had placed them, not in the library, but in a large room in one of the wings of the castle, which was then called Wilhelmsburg.

Leonard Schurzfleisch was succeeded in his office of librarian by Johann Mathias Gesner, a man of experience and studious habits, in every way suited for the post of director of a library, which now ranked as *the third* in order of merit amongst German libraries. Unfortunately, Gesner was involved in the downfall of his patron Von Marschal, and left Weimar, being finally called to the University of Göttingen where he was highly esteemed.

Duke Wilhelm Ernst died in 1728, leaving the library he had founded well filled with rare and valuable books and manuscripts. Great additions were made by the purchase in 1779, of the Schöberschen collection of the writings of the Minnesängers in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and

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of the Meistersingers in the sixteenth and seventeenth; also curious manuscripts from the time of the Reformation, which were much increased by the purchase in 1782 of the Symbolischen library.

Some remarkable works were secured later, when, by Goethe's advice, the Büttner collection was bought, this being later divided between Jena and Weimar. In consequence of the suppression of the convents, large collections of missals, Bibles and breviaries, with rare illuminations by the monks, came into the market, also chronicles of great antiquity. In 1803 Karl August purchased in Ulm two hundred and seventy heraldic books, to add to the already large number of similar works in the Schurzfleisch collection, and through the munificence of his descendant, the late Grand Duke of Weimar, further additions have been made.

There is, moreover, a full collection of books on costumes, weapons, etc.; of Bibles and catechisms, and of German Singespile from 1450 to 1760.<sup>1</sup> Also the collection of books belonging to the Gore family, who had so long resided in Weimar, which numbered nine hundred volumes; the library of Prince Constantine added in 1804, that of Anna Amalia in 1807, and of her brother Duke August of

<sup>1</sup> The late grand duke was a munificent benefactor to the library.

Brunswick, together with legacies from private individuals, have enriched the already full Library. Mention must be made of the curious collection of playing cards,<sup>1</sup> beginning from the fifteenth century, which attracts much attention.

The charm which is so potent in the library cannot be conveyed by description. It must be seen to be fully appreciated. Its situation, its air of repose and silence, are not so remarkable; these attractions are to be found in many libraries, but not so the associations. These are unique and belong to Weimar. All round the beautifully proportioned hall, with its spiral staircases leading to the gallery overhead, works of art are collected, which even those who are not bookishly inclined cannot (unless they are destitute of *all* appreciation) fail to enjoy. These include the marble bust, by Trippel, of Goethe in 1788, when he was the young giant of literature; it is faced by that of Schiller, by Dannecker.

Trippel was a daring genius, and while he astonished by his audacity, yet forced even his critics to admiration. He is in strong contrast to the French sculptor, Houdon, whose bronze bust of Glück is a masterpiece. In 1774, Karl August,

<sup>1</sup> Some of these cards were stolen during the occupation of Weimar by the French troops. The thief was said to be a colonel.

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then a young man, saw the bust in the artist's studio, and bought it for four Louis d'or. It is now the only original of Glück by Houdon, for the marble bust of him, which was executed by the same sculptor for the Paris Opera House, was destroyed in the fire which consumed the theatre.

The monumental bust of Goethe is by the French sculptor, David d'Angers, who came to Weimar in 1829, to take a cast of Goethe's head. Two years later, in 1831, the colossal bust arrived with a letter from David expressing his satisfaction that he had been able to transmit to posterity the features of the greatest of living writers. The bust was placed in the library and unveiled on Goethe's last birthday, August 31st, 1831. A much more agreeable presentment of the great poet is to be found in another room. It is only a pencil drawing, by Schwerdtgeburth, of Goethe in his old age, sitting in his armchair; but it is instinct with life, and must have been a faithful likeness. Dannecker's bust of Schiller, to which allusion has been made, is a fine work, superior to the bust of Goethe by the same sculptor.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Schiller's body was laid on May 11th, 1805, in Jacob's Church-yard, in which many noble families, both formerly and later, were interred. In March 1826 the Burgomeister of Weimar, Hofrath Schwabe, undertook to disinter the remains, and remove them to a vault. With much difficulty Schiller's skull was identified, and on September 17th of the same year it was with much pomp and

The library is also rich in reminiscences of a later circle of literary men, whose intellectual qualities, although perhaps they did not reach so high a standard as the first, have nevertheless claims on the respect of future generations. This second circle included Johannes Schulze, Abeken, Riemer, Franz

ceremony placed in the library, near to the marble bust by Dannecker, which Karl August had bought from the Schiller family for 200 ducats. The pedestal upon which it stands was intended for the skull to rest upon. Goethe, who was ill, was represented by his son, August von Goethe, who with Ernest Schiller made speeches, while Riemer's Cantata, set to music by Hummel, was performed, and then with every mark of honour Schiller's skull was laid on the pedestal. Schiller's remains were afterwards at Goethe's suggestion, disinterred and were brought to the library and placed in a sarcophagus. It was then that Goethe wrote his lines on Schiller's skull, a beautiful composition. There was soon another change. Karl August wrote in 1827 to Goethe, expressing his wish that Schiller's body as well as the skull of which a cast was to be taken should be removed to the "new churchyard," and laid in the vault which he had built for himself and his race; and in accordance with this wish, so honourable to the deceased, Schiller's remains were once more removed.\*

It was on Sunday December 16th that the removal took place. August von Goethe again represented his father, who was ill; the Director of the Library, with six of the head mechanics of Weimar, assembled in the great hall at the sarcophagus, round which six large silver candelabra burned. Upon the coffin there lay a fresh laurel wreath. After a short prayer the coffin was raised and carried by the master mechanics on their shoulders, away from the library and along the road to the park, to the new churchyard and into the duke's vault. In the vault the coffin was received by the Court Marshal von Spiegel, Chancellor von Müller, and Burgomeister Schwabe, and once more the coffin was opened. On raising a beautifully embroidered coverlet the skeleton of Schiller was seen.

\* Goethe's remains also lie in the duke's vault.

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Passow, Heinrich Boss, and Eckermann ; they were led, so to speak, by Meyer, and their general *réunion* took place at Frau Johannes Schopenhauer's, where all the *littérateurs* of Weimar met twice a week. We are given to understand these meetings were not always serene. Moreover, the autocratic sway exercised by Goethe, especially in his later years, roused opposition in the minds of the golden youth. Neither was the great poet's admiration for Napoleon to the liking of his *confrères*.

Of great interest is the account of Napoleon's presence in Weimar on the occasion of the congress of Erfurt. This was in 1808, when Talleyrand paid a visit to the library. The statesman, who was shown all that was of interest by Johannes Schulze, was greatly interested in the curios of this rare collection, especially the woodcuts of Lucas Cranach, in the translation of the Bible by Luther, which is one of the treasures of the ducal library ; also Flaxman's illustrations of Homer. On this peaceful occasion Napoleon received Goethe and Wieland. A few months before the emperor's visit Madame de Stael came to Weimar, accompanied by Benjamin Constant. The bust of this remarkable woman, which is in the library, is by Tieck. Opposite to it is one of Zacharias Werner.



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